Daily Report

Central Eurasia

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FBIS-SOV-94-058 *25 March 1994*

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NOTICE TO FBIS CENTRAL EURASIA DAILY REPORT READERS:

Various Moscow media have announced that, starting on 15 March, their Russian-language services would revert to the Russian rendering of place-names for geographic areas that were formerly part of the Soviet Union, to "protect the Russian language as a national asset." To date, the Russian media have been inconsistent in their usage of Russian and vernacular place-names. Until a consistent pattern is noted, FBIS reports will follow the Russian source's rendering of place-names. If the source rendering varies from the approved FBIS rendering (which is based on lists from the U.S. Board on Geographic Names), the FBIS approved equivalent will follow within square brackets whenever possible.

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Britain Ready To Help Form Baltic Peacekeeping Force

WS2403143794 Tallinn ETA in English 0818 GMT 24 Mar 94

[From "News Bulletin" No. 57/94]

[Text] The British specialists are willing to contribute to the forming of the Baltic peacekeeping battalion, Defence Minister Indrek Kannik announced yesterday after meeting the British military attache to the Baltic states Janis Kazocins. A group of British experts is to arrive on 18 April to hold a seminar on relations between military and civilian authorities. A joint delegation of British and Nordic military lawyers will arrive on 25 April to make recommendations on the legal basis for the Baltic battalion. Kannik stressed the importance of the legal aid since Estonia has no specialists of its own in that field.

Grachev Supervises Military Exercises in Tajikistan

LD2503111794 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 0400 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] The first exercises of collective peacekeeping forces in the history of the CIS took place in a bend of the rivers Vakhsh and Pyandzh near the Tajik-Afghan border. Taking part in them were units of the 201st Russian divisions, subunits of the Armed Forces of Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and the Russian border troops, a total of about 2,000 personnel.

Under the overall leadership of Russia's Defense Minister Pavel Grachev, the troops repelled attacks made by a designated opponent towards the town of Kurgan-Tyube then went over onto the attack and expelled the opponent from Tajik territory.

The head of the Russian military department gave a high assessment of the combat training and the coordination of the actions of the various units of the peace-keeping forces and specially emphasized that these were planned exercises and not in any way a demonstration of strength or anything similar.

Fortunately war, even in training, ends sooner or later and the soldiers who were tired by the temperature of 28 degrees could relax a little. Those who had proved most worthy were presented with orders and medals and the songs introduced pleasant variety into service life.

In the afternoon the Defense Minister went to Farkhar [Parkhar], a rayon center in Khatlon Oblast where he was made an honorary citizen yesterday. Pavel Grachev made an unofficial approach towards this a year ago when he ordered an aircraft to be sent there with medicines and doctors in order to halt an epidemic of a very severe form of hepatitis which affected almost half the town's inhabitants. There were gifts this time, too. The local hospital was given 5,000 disposable syringes.

Summing up the results of his trip, Pavel Grachev said that the exercises showed that the treaty on the collective security of CIS countries was already operating, although not to the desired extent. He said that this was because the Armies of the majority of the states which had signed this document in Tashkent were still in the stage of being set up. Touching on the stay of Russian troops in Tajikistan, a subject which many find painful, the Defense Minister said that it was better to ensure the country's security on distant frontiers and the most important thing was that Russia did not have the moral right to abandon the 200,000 ethnic Russians living there to their fate.

ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 25 March

LD2503080094 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0732 GMT 25 Mar 94

["Press Review"—ITAR-TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow, 25 March (TASS)—ROSSIISKIYE VESTI on the discussion of draft federal budget by the State Duma:

"The Duma has made a really fabulous present to the cabinet of Viktor Chernomyrdin by allowing to grant a credit of 10,600,000 million roubles to the government in the second quarter of this year on a 10-year instalment plan, beginning from 1998, at ten percent at annum, to offset the federal budget deficit".

The newspaper's opinion is that the draft budget plan is subject to an endorsement procedure which, according to expert estimates, may continue for several months.

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA (independent newspaper) carries an interview with Latvian Deputy Defence Minister Dainis Turlais, who particiates in the Russo-Latvian inter-state talks.

Turlais visualises cooperation between Latvia and Russia only within the framework of civilised state relations. He pointed out as follows:

"Some people both in Russia and Latvia try to substitute power politics for a normal relationship" or "try to play on national feelings. One should not rake up old grievances or look for some scheming in each other's policies.

"At this difficult time, errors are inevitable on one and the other side. One must realise that we—two neighbouring states—can do a lot of useful things for each other."

The Latvian deputy defence minister spoke about the development of national defence forces, military cooperation among the three Baltic countries, and the republic's participation in the partnership-for-peace programme.

In NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA, Konstantin Zatulin, a member of the State Duma and chairman of the committee for CIS affairs and relations with compatriots,

recognises it necessary "now that the country is experiencing a hard political and economic crisis, to get agreement on politicial struggle conditions which the main political forces would agree not to break," and, for the sake of achieving national concord "to forget what divided these forces in the past."

Zatulin sees a way out of the economic crisis first of all in changing the taxation system. The point is, without reducing the already dramatically slashed expenditure on social needs, to move from draconian taxes and a narrow taxation basis to sparing taxes and, accordingly, a broad basis of their application."

"It is essential to reduce budget deficit through the placement of securities and to hold out until funds start to come in as a result of the expansion of the taxation basis and the tightening of tax discipline"

In IZVESTIYA, prominent eye surgeon Svyatoslav Fedorov, who organised a highly profitable eye microsurgery joint-stock company, sees a way out of the current critical situation in the Russian economy primarily in the establishment of closed-type joint-stock companies where shares are distributed among producers depending on seniority and salary, and with a transfer of all means of production to the work collectives.

Fedorov also points out the need to abolish a profit tax, freeze the export of raw materials and sell them to domestic producers at frozen prices lower than world ones, and exempt investments from taxes for several years until the producer becomes independent and repays the debts.

IZVESTIYA on a "Coup Scenario No.2" anonymous message with a false fax number:

"A 'Coup Scenario No.2' Anonymous Message With a False Fax Number of Sender is Out and Reaches High Places" is the headline of an article by Vladimir Ivanidze, who comments on the second anonymous message the text of which reached the OBSHCHAYA GAZETA (COMMON NEWSPAPER) last Friday.

Ivanidze is of the opinion that "the anonymous message writers not so much blew up the political situation in the country as added distinctiveness to the aberration afflicting our society".

RABOSHAYA TRIBUNA runs a statement by Petr Romanov, member of the federation council.

"Under conditions when the present constitutional justices are virtually jobless and do not engage in judicial activities, they could, impelled by civic motives, participate in the quest for national concord in society, and advise executive and legislative power bodies, without a reward in addition to the state-provided salary which they receive for inaction", the statement said.

PRAVDA on non-application of amnesty to former Security Minister Viktor Barannikov.

The newspaper asserts that the office of the Russian Federation prosecutor-general did not apply the amnesty to former Security Minister Viktor Barannikov, who remains under investigation. His defence lawyer D. Shteinberg believes that this can hardly be explained by arguments that "the person staying in hospital has been forgotten in the struggle which A. Kazannik waged with the presidential entourage, seeking to release Aleksandr Rutskoy and Ruslan Khasbulatov and their associates as soon as possible."

The defence lawyer is convinced that Barannikov "has not been forgotten or pardoned." A certain role in this is played by the fact that the former minister "knows very much about Kremlin secrets."

Chernomyrdin, Gore Satisfied With Meeting

LD2503094294 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0337 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] During a telephone conversation Thursday night, Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and U.S. Vice President Albert Gore expressed their mutual satisfaction with the progress achieved by the joint Russian-American commission for economic and technological cooperation. They pointed to the importance of the recently signed agreement on the conditions of Russian uranium exports to the U.S., the exploration of oil and gas sites on the continental shelf in Russia's Far East and the Russian government's agreement with the International Monetary Fund on granting Moscow the second part of the systematic reconstruction credit worth $1.5 Bn. [billion]

The Russian Government press office said the telephone conversation lasted 47 minutes.

A press release stated that within the framework of the continuing joint work, U.S. secretary of Commerce Ron Brown, the chairman of one of the committees of the Russian-American commission, will arrive in Moscow next week. During his stay, he will be received by Viktor Chernomyrdin.

Chernomyrdin and Gore agreed to hold the third meeting of the Russian-American commission for economic and technological cooperation in Washington this June.

Foreign Ministry Seeks Multilateral Solution on DPRK

LD2403154294 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1502 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Report by ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Boris Krivoshey]

[Text] Moscow, 24 Mar—The situation surrounding the problem of the DPRK's participation in the nuclear nonproliferation treaty (NPT) is prompting growing anxiety and alarm. Acting on the basis of its firm, consistent adherence to the NPT and its determination to prevent a center of tension—especially nuclear—emerging on its borders, Russia is in favor of a comprehensive settlement to the situation, says a Russian Foreign Ministry statement, with which Grigoriy Karasin, director of the Information and Press Department of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, acquainted journalists at a briefing today.

Russia is prepared, the document observes, to support the resolution now under discussion in the UN Security Council appealing to the DPRK to meet its commitments to the IAEA [International Atomic Energy Agency] under the NPT.

Taking account of the fact that the talks have not been crowned with success, we regard as inadequate attempts to tackle the problem within a bilateral framework. We propose using a multilateral approach, which could be centered on an international conference attended by Russia, China, the United States, Japan, the DPRK, the ROK, and representatives of the UN secretary general and the IAEA director general, the Russian Foreign Ministry statement says.

We are certain, the Russian foreign policy department stresses, that only such an approach will enable us to find mutually acceptable, balanced solutions, which will ensure that the nuclear nonproliferation regime is strengthened and simultaneously prevent the situation from slipping into confrontation.

The Russian Federation Foreign Affairs Ministry today issued a statement, which says:

"The situation surrounding the problem of the DPRK's participation in the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] is prompting growing anxiety and alarm. Acting on the basis of its firm, consistent adherence to the NPT and its determination to prevent a center of tension—especially nuclear—emerging on its borders, Russia is in favor of a comprehensive settlement to the situation.

"First: We are prepared to support the resolution now under discussion in the UN Security Council appealing to the DPRK to meet its commitments to the IAEA [International Atomic Energy Agency] under the NPT. We will also seek decisive action by the Security Council in all other instances where threats of nuclear proliferation emerge, without double standards.

"Second: Taking account of the fact that the talks have not been crowned with success, we regard as inadequate attempts to tackle the problem within a bilateral framework. We propose using a multilateral approach, which could be centered on an international conference attended by Russia, China, the United States, Japan, the DPRK, the ROK, and representatives of the UN secretary general and the IAEA director general. This format for the conference is the most logical, because the aforementioned countries are located on the Korean Peninsula or in the immediate vicinity, and have a realistic ability to play a special part in a settlement.

"The agenda for the conference must make it possible to reach comprehensive solutions that take account of the legitimate interests of all the parties involved. In particular, subjects for discussion and agreement could be security guarantees for the DPRK and the ROK, assistance for the process of denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula with international guarantees of its nonnuclear status, including appropriate international verification [kontrol], and guarantees of noninterference in the internal affairs of the DPRK and ROK.

"We are certain that only such an approach will enable us to find mutually acceptable, balanced solutions that will ensure that the nuclear nonproliferation regime is strengthened and simultaneously prevent the situation from slipping into confrontation."

North Korean Envoy Interviewed on Bilateral Relations

LD2403231494 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 0345 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] The situation in connection with the IAEA [International Atomic Energy Agency] nuclear inspection in the DPRK was aggravated yet again this week. The United States insists that the DPRK opposes full control. In this connection, the regular round of the Korean-American talks was disrupted and it is not ruled out that the "Team Spirit" exercises might be resumed, which is causing great concern in North Korea. The DPRK Foreign Ministry made a statement in this connection which describes the United States' actions as perfidious.

I have spoken to the DPRK ambassador Son Sung-pil. I asked him what importance in this connection North Korea was attaching to the Soviet-Korean friendship treaty, since Russia was the legal successor to such treaties, and under this treaty our state was supposed to support the DPRK in the event of an armed conflict. The ambassador replied:

[Begin Son recording, in Korean fading into Russian translation] Russia is the legal successor to all international treaties, and therefore in this sense Russia also inherited this treaty. The only problem is how each side will fulfill its obligations under the treaty.

Since there is as yet no military conflict, it is difficult to predict, and one should not predict what Russia is going to do in this case. When concrete actions or circumstances have taken place then, perhaps, Russia will demonstrate its position on the treaty. We can only wish that the Russian Government should understand correctly the essence and truth of this nuclear problem and should not create any obstacles on the way of a fair solution to the problem, and, on the contrary, should assist in resolving the problem objectively and fairly. [end recording]

It seems to me that for the time being the Russian position with regard to this incident is very restrained.

Foreign Ministry on Kuril Troop Withdrawal Issue

LD2403145694 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1326 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Report by ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Boris Krivoshey]

[Text] Moscow 24 Mar—The issue of a possible reduction in the number of Russian troops on the South Kuril islands and their modernization has nothing to do with the problem of the peace treaty between Russia and Japan, Grigoriy Karasin, the director of the Russian Foreign Ministry's press and information department said at a briefing today.

He said that during talks at different levels between Russia and Japan, Japan had more than once posed the question of the withdrawal of Russian Armed Forces from the South Kuril islands. In answer to this we have always made it quite clear that the issue of the stationing of Russia's Armed Forces on Russian territory is our country's internal affair only and cannot be a subject for discussion at the talks with Japan, Karasin stressed.

Churkin Announces 100 More Troops To Go to Sarajevo

LD2503092794 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0318 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Report by diplomatic correspondents Dmitriy Voskoboynikov, Igor Porshnev, Vitaliy Trubetskoy, and others from the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature]

[Text] An additional 100-strong Russian peacekeeping contingent will go to Sarajevo from Ryazan on 26 March, the Russian president's special envoy, Deputy Foreign Minister Vitaliy Churkin told a press conference Thursday.

He said there would be Russian Orthodox and Muslim members in it, which reflected Russia's objective position. Russia rejects accusations of having a pro-Serb or any other position, he added.

He said that relations between the leaders of Croatia and the self-proclaimed Republic of Serb Krajina must be normalized. "There are ebbs and flows in relations between Zagreb and Knin, fraught with the danger of violence that may bury peaceful settlement in former Yugoslavia," he said.

He said that talks on a cease-fire were held in the Russian embassy in Zagreb on Tuesday. "The world community unanimously believes that cease-fire is the first thing to be achieved. Then economic relations must be normalized and then the political status of Croatia's Serb regions must be defined," said Churkin.

He pointed out that the talks in Zagreb were held in an absolutely new context. They involved representatives of the U.S., the international peace conference on former Yugoslavia, the EU, the UN and Russia. "Unfortunately, no agreement on a cease-fire was signed, and individual details are still to be specified. We hope, however, that during the next few days representatives of the UN and of the UN protection force in former Yugoslavia will take charge of this. We also hope that the talks will be continued in the Russian embassy in Zagreb on 29 March," said Churkin.

He emphasized that the agreement between Zagreb and Knin was not simply a cease-fire agreement, but a complicated military-technical document envisaging the disengagement of the conflicting parties and a number of security measures.

Croat tourist companies have been actively inviting Russian tourists to visit Croatia lately, Churkin went on to say. "Before the Croats and Krajina Serbs reach a cease-fire agreement I would not recommend that Russian citizens spend their holidays in Croatia," he said.

Airborne Commander on Troop Strength in Bosnia

LD2503112494 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1039 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] Moscow 25 March, TASS—One hundred and twenty Russian paratroopers are flying from the military aerodrome "Dyagilova" (Ryazan) today to former Yugoslavia to reinforce the Russian battalion under the U.N. peacekeeping force command, the newspaper "SEGODNYA" (TODAY) writes.

Quoting Russian airborne troops commander Colonel-General Yevgeniy Podkolzin, the paper said that there are 1,200 Russian paratroopers in former Yugoslavia. A month ago from the Klis airport in Serb Krajina, where then 900 Russian paratroopers were stationed, 400 men were moved to Sarajevo, who, contrary to normal regulations marched some 500 km in 24 hours.

The Russian battalion in former Yugoslavia, popularly called "Rusbat," has been divided, Yevgeniy Podkolzin said. Now there are two Russian battalions in Yugoslavia. The first one, which left in Klis, is commanded by Colonel Sergey Voznesenski, and the second one in Sarajevo—by Colonel Viktor Vorobyov.

The federal assembly has decided to despatch another 300 paratroopers and an echelon with armoured vehicles. According to U.N. peacekeeping force regulations, any military equipment arriving at the places, where U.N. missions are being carried out, is paid for according to international prices. In the given case the United Nations will purchase armoured personnel carriers from Russia, the paper writes.

Churkin Gives News Conference on Yugoslav Settlement

LD2403145894 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1452 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Report by ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Valeriy Sevryukov]

[Text] Moscow 24 March, TASS—"No international efforts or mediators' trick will be able to lead to the settlement of the Yugoslav conflict unless the sides involved realise the need for resolving the conflict," Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Vitaliy Churkin said.

Speaking at a news briefing in Moscow on Thursday, Churkin expressed regret that the sides could not reach an agreement on cease-fire and the withdrawal of troops from the front line due to objective reasons. At the same time, he said that the meeting has confirmed the existence of an entirely new "format of mediatory activity." Russian, U.S., EU and UN mediators who took part in the talks acted jointly. This allowed them to influence the sides' behaviour in a constructive way and help the sides find common positions at the most critical stages of the negotiation process.

The Zagreb talks have confirmed the correctness of the chosen priorities in reaching a final settlement of the Yugoslav conflict. Mediators believe that ceasefire agreements are a top priority. The next step would be normalisation of economic ties between Croatia and "districts with the capital in Knin." This will create favourable conditions for determining the political status of these districts, he said.

Disagreements in relations between Zagreb and the "Serb capital in Knin" are fraught with a situation in which "any prospects of settlement in the former Yugoslavia will be buried," the diplomat said. He said the mediators will use the remaining time before the next round of talks scheduled for 29 March to try to bring the warring sides to the realisation of the need to find constructive approaches, he said.

Grachev Praises Standard of Exercises in Tajikistan

LD2403175194 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1640 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Report by ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Gondusov]

[Text] Dushanbe 24 March, TASS—CIS joint peacekeeping forces, with air and artillery units from Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan attached to them, demonstrated high combat skills in well-coordinated actions within the framework of military exercises held in southern Tajikistan on Thursday.

Taking part in the manoeuvres were some 2,000 servicemen, backed by dozens of armoured vehicles and gun mounts, combat planes and helicopters of the latest models. The exercises were supervised by Russian Defence minister Pavel Grachev. Also present at the command post were Tajik Prime Minister Abdudzhalil Samadov, Tajik Defence Minister Aleksandr Shishlyannikov and Uzbek Defence Minister Rustam Akhmedov.

The manoeuvres simulated a situation at the Tajik-Afghan border, commander of peacekeeping troops in Tajikistan Boris Pyankov, who headed the exercises, told TASS. Their plot was as follows: A simulated enemy suddenly breaks through the CIS external border on the segment guarded by the Pyandzh border unit and tries to penetrate deep into Tajik territory, which makes CIS joint peacekeeping forces and units attached to them to enter a fierce battle. The simulated enemy is subjected to mass artillery shelling and air strikes, then motorized infantry units and tanks join the battle. The enemy is thrown back, and the state border is restored.

The manoeuvre commander and the Russian defence minister especially praised well-coordinated joint actions by the Russian, Tajik and Uzbek battalions.

After the manoeuvres, Grachev noted that the exercise site had been well organized from the engineering point of view. He also stressed that all troops participating in the manoeuvres had successfully coped with the task set before them.

According to the Russian defence minister, the main specific feature about this large-scale action was that it simulated a real situation.

All in all, CIS joint peacekeeping forces are scheduled to hold 12 military exercises this year.

Israel Interested in Military Cooperation

LD2403173894 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1130 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Report by ITAR-TASS special correspondent Aleksandr Trushin]

[Text] Santiago, 24 Mar—Retired General David Shoval, director of a directorate in Israel's Defense Ministry, is for close contacts between Israel and Russia in the military-industrial sphere. In an interview with ITAR-TASS on Wednesday [23 March], he said that there are good prospects for such cooperation, especially for joint modernization of old military equipment.

We should look for ways of cooperating in the military-industrial field. It would have been difficult to imagine this cooperation five years ago, but today it is quite possible. We made our first contacts at aerospace salons in Singapore and Paris and we should also use the [current] FIDAE-94 [expansion unknown] [exhibition]. We still do not know each other well. In the military-industrial sphere, we could start by exchanging information, David Shoval said.

All of Israel's state, private, and mixed enterprises producing arms and military equipment are subordinated to the directorate headed by Retired General D. Shoval, which controls all of Israel's military exports.

Retired General Shoval is in Santiago as one of the heads of the Israeli delegation at the international FIDAE-94 aerospace exhibition. On show from Israel's military industry are military trucks and service trucks, electronic arms, land, air and sea firing systems, and small arms weapons. According to the [retired] general, the most promising developments are in the field of infrared apparatus, [examples of which are] on show at the exhibition.

Currently, nearly 80 percent of Israel's military production is exported, some going to South America, said David Shoval. During the exhibition, a deal was struck with Chile for the delivery of service vehicles for the Carbineers Corps. At the same time, military budgets are being reduced in practically all countries of the world and Israel is no exception. As a result, some of our enterprises have started to modernize old equipment and weapons and are cooperating with a number of foreign firms in this. We could begin such cooperation with Russia, in particular, by renovating the close-range MIG-21 fighters. "You have high technology, while we could install modern electronic equipment in old planes. Currently, thousands of old MIG's are out of use. If we brighten them up, it could be a mutually profitable business," David Shoval said.

Shumeyko on Russian Foreign Policy

LD2403204294 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2022 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Report by ITAR-TASS correspondent Nikita Yermakov]

[Text] Paris 24 March, TASS—Russia's foreign policy passed several stages in the last two years, Vladimir Shumeyko, head of the Federation Council, the upper house of the new parliament, said.

Speaking at a news conference in Paris on Thursday, Shumeyko said that Russia had been forming its foreign policy since it had declared sovereignty in June 1990. The process was hampered by political complications within the country, which distracted attention from foreign policy.

But Russia has now approached the stage when it should build genuine democracy and a free civil society. The adoption of the Constitution and parliamentary elections have started the process of strengthening Russian statehood. Russia is a powerful, strong and sovereign state which remains open for cooperation, Shumeyko said.

Speaking about Russia's accession to the Council of Europe, Shumeyko noted that previously Russia asked for allowing it to join the council on special terms. But now the situation is different. "At the talks in Strasbourg with the Council of Europe leaders several days ago we did not ask for any exceptions for Russia. All admission procedures will be observed and the question of Russia's admittance to the Council of Europe will be included in the agenda by the end of the summer," he said.

Much will change in the Council of Europe after Russia joins it, Shumeyko continued. "Without our country it is impossible to solve European problems. It is impossible to do without taking into account Russia's opinion. This particularly concerns changes in Eastern Europe, including the states that have emerged in the former Soviet Union. There are laws by which empires emerge, but there are no laws by which they would disintegrate. Therefore, there are many problems to be discussed at the Council of Europe," Shumeyko said.

Asked about President Boris Yeltsin's health, Shumeyko replied that he is in good health, adding that some

politicians are trying to destabilise the political situation in the country which has become more stable than a year ago.

Commenting on the results of the recent elections to local bodies of power in Russia, Shumeyko said that people did not show up at polling stations because they are tired of politics. However, he stressed that it is not the voters who are to be blamed but politicians who do not offer positive programmes.

Grachev Contests Control of Peacekeeping Forces

LD2303193094 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1725 GMT 23 Mar 94

[Text] The Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev has spoken out against the surrender of Russian peacekeeping forces to the Ministry for Emergencies. At a Wednesday meeting with the press he said that everywhere peace-keepers are subordinate directly to the national Armed Forces.

He stressed that the new ministry does not have any combat weapons at its disposal. "Even when it carries out its missions it rents ships, aviation and armored vehicles from the Armed Forces and pays for their use", he said.

In Grachev's opinion the Ministry for Emergencies has no experience in commanding peace-keeping forces. He said that the purpose of the ministry is to resolve domestic problems: deal with the consequences of air crashes, accidents on railways or power stations etc.

"Peace-keeping tasks lie beyond the territory of the Russian Federation", he stressed.

At a news conference on March 17 the Minister for Emergencies Sergey Shoygu spoke in favor of subordinating the Russian peace-keeping force to his ministry.

Defense Minister Pavel Grachev expressed the opinion that the Federal Assembly will pass a law on the peacekeeping force after the April 20th. He told journalists that the status of units of the Russian Armed Forces performing peace-keeping functions has not been defined yet.

Answering a question from Interfax Grachev expressed the hope that the defense budget would be increased in 1994. He stressed that legislators are also responsible for the security of the state. According to Grachev, the budget proposed by the cabinet will not allow his ministry to continue reforming the Army. He said the money will not be enough to purchase the necessary weapons and machinery.

"With such a budget I will not be able to build strong Armed Forces," Pavel Grachev said.

British Ambassador on Moscow's Involvement in G-7

LD2503095794 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0318 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Report by diplomatic correspondents Dmitriy Voskoboynikov, Igor Porshnev, Vitaliy Trubetskoy and other from the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature]

[Text] Next summer's summit of the G-7 group in Naples will see another important step towards Russia's involvement in the activities of the G-7, notably in the political sphere, British ambassador to Russia Brian Fall said in response to an INTERFAX question.

He said that this decision could only be made jointly by all members of the group, and that he was fairly certain that this step would be taken.

He said, however, that the contribution Russia was making to the world economy was much below that of most advanced countries. He was confident, however, that once the dust settles and the reforms were complete, Russia would start getting rich. Its wealth was in its highly educated and skilled workforce.

Fall did not think that Western aid could solve all Russian problems. The West is sometimes criticized for helping Russia too little too late. There are reasons for that, however. Numerous entrepreneurs think that Russia is not predictable or stable enough and demand safety guarantees for their capital, he said. Russia has to create a more favorable environment for western private investments. He said that numerous Russian businessmen preferred to keep their capital in foreign banks. If Russian money flees Russia, why should the West invest in it, he asked.

Fall emphasized that the West continued to support President Boris Yeltsin, not as an individual but as the leader of Russian reforms. Meanwhile the West understood that Russia had come across numerous internal problems. This was probably the reason of the "painful reaction" to contacts between foreign political figures and the Russian opposition. British Premier John Major had recently visited the U.S. where he had meetings with representatives of various political movements. Nobody asked him why he had spent so much time with George Bush or Ross Perrot or accused him of pursuing a wrong line, Fall said.

He emphasized that a fully-fledged European security system was out of the question without Russia. He thought that the geostrategic environment was favorable for a system which sidelined neither Russia nor East European countries. A security system must be set up as soon and as broadly as possible.

Soldier Kills Commander, Comrades at Nuclear Site

LD2403175794 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1730 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Report by ITAR-TASS correspondent Valentin Pavlov]

[Text] Barnaul 24 March, TASS—Several people were killed after a soldier opened fire in one of the Russian ICBM units in southwestern Siberia.

The accident occurred during a guard mounting ceremony when one of the soldiers armed with a submachine gun suddenly opened fire, killing his commander and several fellow soldiers. The guards on duty did not retaliate, fearing that bullets may hit fuel tanks of nuclear missiles deployed at the site. In that case a catastrophe would have been inevitable.

The local newspaper ALTAYSKAYA PRAVDA said that the guards are prohibited from firing in the direction of the missiles even in the event of an attack by a subversive group.

It took the commander of the unit three hours to persuade the soldier to surrender. During all this time the soldier, resident of Daghestan, did not leave a combat vehicle he had seized earlier.

The newspaper said that the "critical" accident that happened on March 10 was not reported to local counterintelligence officials, which explains why there was no order to send paratroopers to the site.

The newspaper did not speculate about possible motives of the accident.

Russia, Ukraine Pool Efforts To Combat Smuggling

LD2203130694 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1228 GMT 22 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Gondusov]

[Text] Moscow March 22 TASS—Russian and Ukrainian border guards gathered on Monday in a working meeting in the central russian town of Voronezh. The meeting was chaired by Russian Border Troop Commander-in- Chief Andrey Nikolayev. It was also attended by officials of the Russian and Ukrainian Foreign and Interior Ministries, customs and migration services, Russian Border Troop chief spokesman Aleksandr Suvorov reported.

Participants in the meeting passed a resolution on joint protection of the 2,000-kilometre-long border between the two states, including by joint Russian-Ukrainian border details, whose main task will be to thwart smuggling attempts. As a result of the meeting, proposals were elaborated which are to be submitted for the consideration of the Russian and Ukrainian presidents.

According to the spokesman, the Russian Border Troop commander-in-chief plans to visit Kaliningrad in western Russia on March 25-26, and then to take a short-term working trip to Tajikistan.

Spokesman's 'Concern' on Language Restrictions in Moldova

LD2203185694 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1739 GMT 22 Mar 94

[Text] The chief Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman has expressed concern over progressive restrictions on the use of the Russian language in Moldova.

In a republic with an ethnic Russian population of more than half a million, "the diminishing number of Russian groups and classes in kindergartens and educational institutions is bound to cause concern in the Russian Federation," Grigory Karasin said at a news briefing in Moscow on Tuesday.

He said this state of affairs "is on conflict with the agreement on cooperation between the Ministry on the Affairs of Nationalities and Regional Policy of the Russian Federation and the State Department of Ethnic Relations of Moldova, signed in Kishinyov [Chisinau] in November 1993."

Russia's Foreign Ministry has been receiving "numerous appeals" from Russian-speaking citizens of Moldova and their organizations, "expressing deep anxiety about the possibility that, as a result of the forthcoming exams (in Moldova's official Romanian language to be held as of April 2 by decision of the government), non-ethnic Moldovans will be fired from their jobs on a mass scale merely because they have not yet mastered the Romanian language," Karasin said.

He said the Russian Foreign Ministry hoped that Moldova's leadership would take a "well-considered decision conforming to international standards of human rights and taking full account of the demographic, cultural and linguistic factors that have taken shape in the republic in the course of history."

Russia, Belarus Disagree on Merger of Monetary Systems

LD2403174394 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1459 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] State Duma's CIS Affairs and Links with Fellow Countrymen and Economic Policy Committees held hearings on Russo-Belarusian relations Wednesday [23 March].

German Kuznetsov, deputy minister of cooperation with CIS member states and head of the Russian delegation in talks on the merger of monetary systems, told MPs about the differences that the Russian and Belarusian officials had not managed to overcome, such as the rate at which the Belarusian cash should be exchanged for Russian money.

While the Russian experts insisted on using the same rate for exchange of cash and monetary assets and promissory notes, material and other assets, the Belarusian experts believed that the exchange rate had to recognize the actual buying abilities of the Belarusian and Russian rubles.

The two sided had not agreed on leveling the prices for deliveries of products between Russian and Belarusian businesses or on the merger of budgets. The Russian experts believed that the two countries had to adopt legislation in 1994 that would enable the merger of the budgetary systems in 1995, extension of Russian financial and budgetary legislation to Belarus and restriction of the ability of Belarusian authorities to make decisions on these issues because the would have to abide by the Russian legislation.

The Belarusian experts propose laying the groundwork in 1994 for gradual consolidation of the budgets by adopting numerous legislative acts in this field. They also propose leaving out the formula that the two budgets should merge in 1995.

The main stumbling block is the status of the National Bank of Belarus. The Russian negotiators wanted the Bank to be reorganized no later than December 31, 1995 into a subsidiary of the Central Bank of Russia which would take over all its assets and liabilities and proposed extending to Belarus the Russian legislation on banks and banking activities and currency regulation and control. The Belarusian experts wanted the National Bank to retain the right to manage the merged monetary system within Belarus, without turning it into a subsidiary of the CbR [Central Bank of Russia].

Deputy Chairman of the Central Bank of Russia Dmitriy Tulin thought that "the viability and stability of the monetary system being created" would not be assured unless the National Bank of Belarus became a subsidiary of the CBR. He emphasized that even though any kind of responsibility can be incorporated into the agreement, in real life "the extent to which treaties are observed in not impressive."

Tulin said before the process of merging the monetary systems of Russia and Belarus was complete, "the scope of the treaty could not be expanded."

Deputy Economy Minister Sergey Ignatyev emphasized that "the treaty cannot be essentially equal" and that "one currency must have one manager." The treaty should specify that Belarus sacrificed some of its sovereignty in the monetary and crediting sphere and had to comply with the demands made by the Russian authorities.

Deputy Foreign Trade Minister Georgiy Gaboniya said that his ministry supported the merger of the two monetary systems but believed that there were no guarantees that the agreements would be implemented as long as there was no political alliance. The merger should, he thought, culminate in "building a common fence against the rest of the world" such as common import and export duties, a common list of goods on which quotas would be imposed and common rules of trade with third countries."

Political Issues

Chernomyrdin Criticizes Bureacracy in Government

LD2403181894 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 24 Mar 94

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] At the sitting of the government's presidium today, Viktor Chernomyrdin said that the state administrative apparatus had unjustifiably swollen in recent years. He said that in 1991, during the existence of the Soviet Union, executives at all levels had numbered 715,000, while now there were 921,000 state employees in the Russian Federation. There were 350,000 bureaucrats in the district administrative team alone. Viktor Chernomyrdin criticized the Ministry of Finance which had complied with requests from the regions to finance the bloated adminstrative bodies.

Shokhin on Upcoming Government Reorganization

LD2403180694 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1636 GMT 24 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Oleg Velichko]

[Text] Moscow March 24 TASS—Russian Minister of Economics Aleksandr Shokhin said that "the redistribution of duties within the cabinet will take place soon."

In an interview with ITAR-TASS on Thursday, Shokhin said that on March 23 President Boris Yeltsin appointed him vice-prime minister. The appointment fills up the vacancy that existed in the government since January 10. There is one first vice-prime minister and four vice-prime ministers in the Russian Government now.

Shokhin expressed the supposition that he may be put in charge of economy, finances and cooperation with CIS states and international organisations. He added, however, that the exact range of issues to be handled by him will be determined at a meeting with Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin within the next few days.

Speaking about the draft budget for 1994, Shokhin said that the major problem is the "low collectibility of federal taxes." He said the government plans to carry out a programme of measures to rescind previously adopted laws. He did not specify. He stressed that "between the government and the parliament normal conditions have been created for a civilised discussion of the draft budget."

The newly appointed vice-prime minister said that the recently imposed import tariffs is a "rather advanced variant which had been discussed in the government for six months." It is seeking to reconcile the positions of domestic producers and consumers. The inflow of goods from abroad has led to the drop in demand for domestic products and closure of enterprises. Shokhin did not rule out the possibility of establishing, in the future, certain privileges for potential western investors seeking to invest in the Russian economy, rather than sell finished products.

Asked about the problem of non-payments between enterprises, Shokhin noted that he sees the solution in "tightening payment discipline between economic entities and introducing a simplified mechanism for solving disputes."

Reformists' Position 'Strengthened'

LD2503094394 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0331 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] Aleksandr Shokhin, who was appointed as vice prime minister by a presidential decree while retaining his office of economics minister, believes that his appointment is evidence of the fact that the position of "pragmatic reformists" in the government has strengthened.

Speaking at a news conference in Moscow Thursday, Shokhin pointed out that his appointment would be followed by a reshuffle in the government. His consultations with Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin within the next few days will focus on such spheres as economics, finances and external economic relations, including those with former Soviet republics.

Shokhin added that no one had relieved him of his duties as Russia's representative at the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank and that he would supervise these issues in future. He also said that until he was appointed as vice prime minister it was the prime minister who directly supervised the financial and economic spheres. However, Chernomyrdin had come to the conclusion that this was too difficult considering the huge number of other problems, he said.

Shokhin said that reformists who had left the government, such as Yegor Gaydar and Boris Fedorov, did not believe that the government would convince the IMF to grant Russia the second part of the systematic reconstruction credit worth $1.5 Bn. Nevertheless, Chernomyrdin had succeeded, Shokhin said.

Shokhin pointed out that strict credit and financial policies consistent with IMF requirements required the annulment or suspension of a number of social programs with consent by the parliament. The programs, worth a total of Rbs [rubles] 90 Tn, grant privileges and subsidies to enterprises, regions and some social groups.

Shokhin said that the groups included residents of Russia's northernmost areas, servicemen and policemen. He put special emphasis on the fact that it was necessary to involve social and political mechanisms to smooth the effects of this measure as much as possible in the form of a social accord treaty to implement the decision.

Shakhray Interviewed on Election, Goals

MK2303112094 Moscow ROSSIYA in Russian No. 11, 23-29 Mar 94 (Signed to press 22 Mar) p 1

[Interview with Sergey Shakhray, nationalities and regional policy minister, by Tatyana Sukhomlinova under the "Autograph" rubric: "Sergey Shakhray: I Will Take Part in Elections, But Only as a Voter"—place, date not given]

[Text] Sergey Shakhray's name is often mentioned among those who are expected to run for the Russian Federation presidency. According to the Party for Russian Unity and Accord [PRES] leader, participating in the elections is not a priority for him. As such, he singled out "the creation of a robust, effective political party, because without such a system there is nothing to be done in politics."

[Shakhray] I also see another objective in the next few months—to create an effective staff at the Ministry for Nationalities and Regional Policy. So far there has been a lot of fuss about it. But we do not have a ministry yet. A minister and five deputy ministers have been appointed. It has been abolished three times within the past two years. That is all.

[Sukhomlinova] Your party has been portraying itself as an all-Russian organization that recognizes the principles of federalism and local self-government and is oriented toward a market economy. But what is the use of it?

[Shakhray] Our objective is to set up our representation in all echelons of power: from the federal government to the Federation components' bodies of economic authority. This will take two or three years of work. The PRES already has its branches in 66 regions. We have a membership of 22,000 people. But there should be allies, a political infrastructure around the party.

[Sukhomlinova] What is your attitude to your rivals?

[Shakhray] The issue is not the word "rival." At present, the political picture is dominated by the struggle between three political and economic elites: the regional and sectoral ones, and that of Moscow. The regional and sectoral elites are now joining forces against the Muscovites. But the Moscow group itself is divided into four blocs. As far as it is concerned, one should not forget that 70 percent of Russia's banking capital is concentrated in Moscow...

[Sukhomlinova] What four blocs of the Moscow elite are you talking about?

[Shakhray] If I were to answer your question specifically, certain names would have to be mentioned... Everything will be clarified in April. Unfortunately.

Predicts Reduction in Regions

LD2503100694 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0331 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] Minister for Nationalities and Regional Policy Sergey Shakhray says that in the long run Russia will consist of 15-20 larger regions instead of 89 as now. He was speaking at the end of an inter-regional forum in the central Russian city of Tambov on Wednesday.

The forum was attended by representatives of a number of regional associations from central and northwestern Russia, Siberia, the Northern Caucuses, Urals and elsewhere.

However, such a change will take a long time to happen, Shakhray told a meeting of students and lecturers of the Moscow Institute for International Relations Thursday. He said Russia was "destined for a long interim period during which its current structure built along ethnic lines will adapt itself to a new pattern based on a territorial principle".

Shakhray is skeptical about attempts to try to break Russia into provinces either from on-high or below. A lengthy interim period is needed because of the huge variety of Russian regions, he said. Only 23 out of 89 regions is economically self-reliant, others have to be subsidized. As it is now, said Shakhray, the federal government is having to act as an agency for the redistribution of wealth which creates a highly dangerous situation.

The minister reiterated support for the recent agreement between Moscow and Tatarstan describing it as a first ever test of the new method aimed at resolving a power struggle between the center and a region. Shakhray believes this will also help resolve a similar dispute between Moscow and the southern autonomy of Chechnya which appears to be ready for some kind of accommodation.

Shakhray believes that a lack of coordinated effort by the center and political dialogue between North Ossetia and Ingushetia are the main stumbling blocks to regional peace.

However, he does not believe in any regional settlement unless Moscow applies some pressure. Shakhray said the federal government must use economic leverage to bring the two sides to the negotiating table. He reminded the audience that North Ossetia and Ingushetia depended on federal subsidy by 60 and 97 percent respectively.

Moscow Mayor Not Candidate for President

LD2403182394 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1700 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] Today Sergey Tsoy, the head of the press service of the Mayor's Office, denied reports that Yuriy Luzhkov, the mayor of Moscow, was going to run for a post of president of Russia at the upcoming elections for

the head of the state in 1996. He noted in his interview to INTERFAX that Yuriy Luzhkov has never made such statements about his intention to become the president of Russia. Sergey Tsoy underlined that the main task of the mayor is to work in order to improve the life of Muscovites and not to receive any political advantages from his post. He believes that rumors that have been spreading around that the capital's head of administration allegedly has some political ambitions are not only politically irrelevant but also immoral.

Author of 'Palace Coup' Memo Comes Forward

MK2503093094 Moscow OBSHCHAYA GAZETA in Russian No. 12/37, 25-31 Mar (Signed to press 24 Mar) p 1

[Igor Smirnov report under the general heading "Author of "Version No. 1 Names Himself. Co-Authors of the Provocation Stay in the Shadows": "A Joke of Yesterday's Dissident"]

[Text] On Thursday, 24 March, Gleb Pavlovskiy, a well-known journalist and editor-in-chief of the VEK XX I MIR [The 20th Century and the World] magazine, came to our editorial board and said that the theory of the alleged coup, which, upon OBSHCHAYA GAZETA's publication, has been keeping both domestic and foreign mass media in suspense for a week already, was his "working text," a "routine working fact-sheet—a compilation of open data, including reports of news agencies, primarily TASS, POSTFACTUM, and RIA, and also press, radio reports, and so forth."

Mr. Pavlovskiy told us that "the text was prepared by various people using a production line method..." It is analytical material for official use only, and it found its way into the hands of high- ranking officials and to newspaper editorial boards without his knowledge. Mr. Pavlovskiy believes that the "version" was stolen from his work table or from his computer and was distributed by "well-wishers" with whom he is not familiar.

Having neither the possibility nor any wish to verify the authenticity of the details given by Mr. Pavlovskiy, the OBSHCHAYA GAZETA editorial board believes that the theory he divulged is scarcely more convincing than the scandalous "Version No. 1." Mr. Pavlovskiy tells a lie in calling his "working text" "a compilation of open data." The existence of a group of coup plotters, their names, and the details of their "conspiracy" are a wholesale fabrication of the "version's" authors. The way the "facts" were presented is not reminiscent, even remotely, of the drafting of a hypothetical theory. What kind of theory is it if the names of those who are preparing a coup d'etat are written in black and white? It looks much more like an anonymous report to the competent bodies. The former dissident (and, to our great regret, a member of OBSHCHAYA GAZETA's editorial board) appears to have forgotten how much blood the country had to shed because of such "analytical memos."

Presumably, the author of the theory is suffering from exaggerated curiosity and was anxious to find out how his words would echo. That is to say, he was guided by a pure researcher's interest. But so foolish experiments are also too dangerous in a country with a bad heredity.

It cannot be ruled out, either, that Mr. Pavlovskiy simply wished to get embroiled in a scandal: how can one become famous without a scandal? This could have been done in a more humane way, however. But we do not think it necessary to go into the personal plans of the "Version's" author. What's done is done, and it stinks. The author's self-esteem may be considered to have been flattered, though: his initiative (if it is really his, of course) turned out to have many co-authors. After all, someone has started distributing "Version No. 2" following "Version No. 1." This means that is has come in handy for someone. I would dearly love to learn for whom. The provocation's co-authors are still hidden in the shadows.

Shakhray Dismisses Coup Rumors

LD2503101794 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0331 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] Russia's Minister for Nationalities and Regional Policies Sergey Shakhray said that the rumors about a contemplated coup were extremely dangerous. He told a meeting at the Moscow Institute of International Relations that behind those rumors was the wish to present the president and his people as a nest of vipers and make room for the arrival of new people.

Shakhray believes that current political life is defined by a clash between the economic and political elites, above all between the Moscow, regional and industrial elites. Moreover, the regional and industrial elites seem to have united in the struggle against the Moscow elite which, he said, has concentrated 70

of Russia's capital in Moscow banks.

Also, there are clashes between so-called speculative bourgeoisie which exports Russian raw materials, and national bourgeoisie which concentrates on Russian industry. Both of these elites are opposed to one another, which is extremely dangerous, too, said Shakhray.

He stated that the Party of Russian Unity and Concord was among the initiators of the State Duma's resolution on political amnesty.

He believes that the amnesty prevented a strong clash between the elites in April and May. Society has been given a breather at least until next autumn, said Shakhray.

Speaking about the next presidential elections, Shakhray said that he would not run for presidency.

Shumeyko Interviewed on Importance of Strong Russia

PM2503103194 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 25 Mar 94 First Edition pp 1-2

[Interview with Russian Federation Council Chairman Vladimir Shumeyko by POSTFACTUM's Lyudmila Sherova under "In the Federation Council" rubric; place and date not given: "Vladimir Shumeyko: Enough of Shaking the Power"]

[Text] [Sherova] Vladimir Filippovich, much is being said now to the effect that the next treaty to be concluded after the treaty on the delimitation of powers between the federal organs of power and Tatarstan will be a treaty with Kaliningrad Oblast. From whom has this initiative come?

[Shumeyko] The initiative of concluding a treaty between Kaliningrad Oblast Administration and the federal government has come from the Security Council. It should be pointed out that the Potsdam Agreement remains in force in perpetuity. But certain politicians are using its 50th anniversary to raise the question of the oblast's status; they are starting to say in this connection that the Potsdam Agreements are expiring inasmuch as the Soviet Union does not exist, Stalin does not exist, and Russia is not the Union's legal successor in this sphere; and they propose to raise the question of Kaliningrad Oblast's once again becoming a protectorate of Germany or being regarded as a separate state. Along with this there is also talk of the need for a demilitarized zone on the territory of Kaliningrad Oblast, of the fact that the presence of troops hinders economic development, and so on. Therefore the Security Council has decided to sign this treaty.

[Sherova] What is it proposed to enshrine in the treaty? What changes will there be in relations?

[Shumeyko] As we know, the local government can delegate to the federal government as many rights and powers as the federal government can transfer to the local government. Thus, the Security Council reached the conclusion that as many rights as possible must be transferred today to the government of Kaliningrad Oblast, so that the local authorities can react promptly and clearly to any manifestations. For Russia, a quick and appropriate response relating to what is going on in that region is very important.

Therefore we will prepare this treaty very thoroughly. We will weigh up what to transfer and what to take on at the federal level.

[Sherova] The treaty with Tatarstan elicited contradictory comments. How valid are the fears of those who believe that such treaties shake Russia's unity?

[Shumeyko] On the contrary, this strengthens the Federation's unity. Tatarstan is right in the middle of the Russian Federation and does not have external borders. Many people say that it is written in the treaty with Tatarstan that Tatarstan is a subject of international law—which will enable it to secede from the Russian Federation. Secede to where? Either upward or underground?

Moreover, the signing of the treaty with Tatarstan led to elections being held there in March. We in the Federation Council have acquired two more members. By entering the Federation Council, resolving federal problems, and participating in the life of the Federation, Tatarstan is becoming still more involved in all-Russia problems. I would only welcome this treaty.

[Sherova] It will soon be three months since the Federation Council started its work. How satisfied are you with this work?

[Shumeyko] I am satisfied, although many people say: Look, so much time has passed, and not one law has been adopted. It is not a matter today of the number of legislative acts that the Federal Assembly must adopt. It is a matter of quality. We must all be aware of one truth: If we regard the question of the development of the Russian state as being of paramount importance, then we must be very attentive toward the legislative base today. On no account must this legislative base bear a trace of political struggle. I will cite the following example: The chairman of the Federation Council Committee for Agrarian Questions is a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation. Just a few months ago it would have been unthinkable for a leader of the Communist Party to be a committe chairman in a country carrying out democratic transformations.

The standing orders are very important for any parliament. For deputies, standing orders are the paramount law after the Constitution. We adopted the standing orders in half a day. I must say that the last Supreme Soviet never adopted standing orders but worked with temporary standing orders, because, if the democrats' faction proposed something, the communists rejected it, and if the communists proposed something, the democrats rejected it without considering the substance of the proposals.

[Sherova] What are relations like between the Federation Council and the State Duma?

[Shumeyko] Normal. Russia is so tired of political troubles and so tired of a confrontation that is of no use to anyone that we must simply display concerted work. We must now adopt the budget and tax legislation as quickly and correctly as possible.

[Sherova] Do you believe that the strategy enshrined in the president's message and the premier's report is capable of rallying the main political forces to resolve the set tasks?

[Shumeyko] I believe it is. Because both the Duma and we ourselves have responded identically: to discuss in committees, to place on the session agenda, and to

coordinate the president's message with the plan of legislative work. If we really link the president's message with the plan of legislative work and adopt legislation in development of the president's message, then one way or another it will become the rails along which everything will travel.

[Sherova] Many deputies believe that the message says a great deal about what must be done but does not say how to do it.

[Shumeyko] Are we to require everything at once of the head of state: an interpretation both of what is to be done and how to do it? This resembles what things were like in old Rus: The nobleman will come along and settle everything. In the modern world it is impossible to pile all the work onto one person, even if all the analysts work for him. What are the deputies for, then? What are the government, the court, the prosecutor's office, and all the rest for?

The head of state delivered a message which set forth—in my view, for the first time in the whole history of perestroyka—a clear program, and you get the feeling that these are the words of a head of state who has acknowledged a number of mistakes, named all the sensitive points, and indicated what work needs to be done.

I myself am a production worker. In production there are always two camps which argue and fight each other. There is the chief designer and the chief technologist. The designer answers the question: What is to be done? The technologist answers the question: How is it to be done? The truth is born of this dispute.

The head of state is the designer and is responsible for the question of what is to be done in the state today. The technologists are all the rest: the legislators, the government, the prosecutor's office, the court, etc. It is they who must answer the question of how it is to be done.

[Sherova] Do you not think that the emergence of more and more new parties will lead to chaos in political life?

[Shumeyko] More than 100 parties are now registered at the Ministry of Justice. But nothing has come of this. The people live as they lived before. Politicians like to show that they influence what the masses do. In fact they have almost no influence. This can be both good and bad.

[Sherova] But are parties created as a tool to seize power?

[Shumeyko] If a politician does not think of seizing power, he is simply not a politician. But an interesting situation, in my view, has taken shape in Russia today. The question of seizing power has become secondary and disappeared from the agenda. This is something that politicians will never understand. The question of strengthening power stands in first place. All the powers that exist will be strengthened when the Russian state is strong.

Today it is customary to personify power, which is why people associate presidential power with Yeltsin. I respect him, but some people do not like him. Those who do not like him say that presidential power is bad because Yeltsin stands up there. They, these politicians, must understand that if they do not find within themselves today the strength to reinforce this same presidential power and only then fight to become president, then nothing good will happen in Russia. But they are now shaking this power which they subsequently want to seize. Enough of shaking it, it is time to strengthen it.

'Sudden Depressurization' May Have Caused Crash

LD2403190694 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1715 GMT 24 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Roman Zadunayskiy]

[Text] Moscow, 24 Mar—Sudden depressurization of the pilots' cockpit may have caused the crash of the A-310 airbus in Kemerovo oblast. An ITAR-TASS correspondent was told this today by Valeriy Eksuzyan, general director of Russian International Airlines, which operated the airliner.

Using information gathered from the site of the disaster investigation, he pointed out that this scenario is supported by the facts. The investigation has established that the airbus descended from a height of 10,000 m with its engine running at an angle of 70-80 degrees for 10-20 minutes with its navigation lights on and undercarriage retracted. It fell after grazing a hill. The area over which the pieces of the aircraft are scattered is small - 200 meters. The fuselage, cockpit, wings, and other pieces are close together. The three pilots were found in the Airbus's cockpit, strapped to their seats. Their bodies, like 46 bodies of the other people on board, were quite recognizable.

According to Valeriy Eksuzyan, these facts indicate that, as a result of some abnormal phenomena, the pilot's cockpit may have been suddenly depressurized, which, at an altitude of 10km, causes the blood to boil and death ensues quickly, and the aircraft, uncontrolled and on autopilot, lost height until the moment of impact.

However, it will be possible to determine the precise cause of the disaster, according to Valeriy Eksuzyan, only after the two "black boxes", the flight recorders, which were recovered today and were sent to Moscow for study, have been decoded.

Concern Grows Over Trainload of Toxic Waste

PM2503094594 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 24 Mar 94 First Edition p 3

[ITAR-TASS report: "What the Dumping of Toxic Substance Threatens?"]

[Text] The railcars containing industrial waste from France, the Netherlands, and Israel which have been halted for almost 50 days in the Orenburg area have "won" worldwide notoriety. The international environmental organization Greenpeace has drawn attention to the trainload of harmful, toxic substances and demanded that France remove the dangerous consignment from Russia.

What is the nub of the issue here? "The train comprising 16 cars carrying waste products arrived in Orsk for reprocessing at the Yuzhuralnikel combine, but the waste products turned out to contain high levels of harmful substances such as cadmium (up to 15 percent), thallium (2-3 percent), and arsenic. The train was sent further into the steppe—to the Buruktal combine, in Svetlinskiy Rayon. We do not have the techniques for detecting these toxic substances," Chief State Inspector Viktor Blinov, first deputy chairman of Orenburg Oblast's Environment Committee, said.

It is impossible to send the train back, as we have no address, he stressed, explaining: "As soon as the cargo crossed the border at St. Petersburg the consignor relinquished all responsibility. The customhouse at Astovo station let the train in. It clearly should be called to account. And it is strange that the certificate of quality for the raw materials was a week late in coming, by which time the train was already in Buruktal."

Viktor Blinov is worried: With the onset of spring the likelihood of the cadmium, thallium, and arsenic "escaping from the sacks into the environment" increases. He considers that "each sack must be placed in a separate metal container. This constitutes a lot of labor-intensive work requiring not just caution but also huge amounts of money."

Svetlinskiy Rayon administration chief Vasiliy Yeremenko has "evicted" the train from his territory. It has been moved in the direction of Orsk. The wagons are now halted in a railroad siding.

Yeltsin Edict on Trilateral Commission

PM2403141994 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 24 Mar 94 p 3

[Edict No. 555 of the Russian Federation President "On Certain Questions in the Activity of the Russian Trilateral Commission for Regulating Social-Labor Relations," dated 21 March 1994 and signed by Russian Federation President B. Yeltsin]

[Text] With the aim of ensuring regular coordination of positions between the Russian Federation Government, the employers' associations, and the associations of trade unions in the sphere of socioeconomic policy within the framework of the Russian Trilateral Commission for Regulating Social-Labor Relations (hereinafter the Commission) and improving the efficiency of its activity, I decree:

1. To agree with the Commission's proposal on the number of representatives from the Russian Federation Government, the employers' associations, and the associations of trade unions in the Commission.

2. To appoint Yu.F. Yarov, deputy chairman of the Russian Federation Government, as coordinator of the Commission.

3. To deem invalid Point 2 of the edict of the Russian Federation President dated 5 February "On the Russian Trilateral Commission for Regulating Social-Labor Relations" (SOBRANIYE AKTOV PREZIDENTA I PRAVITELSTVA ROSSIYSKOY FEDERATSII [Collected Acts of the Russian Federation President and Government] 1993, No. 7, p 559).

4. The present edict comes into force from the moment it is signed.

[signed] Russian Federation President B. Yeltsin
[dated] Moscow, The Kremlin, 21 March 1994
No. 555

Text of Yeltsin Greeting to Virgin Lands Pioneers

PM2403124594 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 24 Mar 94 First Edition p 1

[Undated message signed by B. Yeltsin: "With Deep Respect and Gratitude"]

[Text] To the participants in the International Scientific-Practical Conference dedicated to the 40th anniversary of the start of the opening up of virgin lands and fallow lands and to all participants in the virgin lands project

I wholeheartedly congratulate you, dear friends, on this noteworthy date in the history of the peoples of Russia and all the CIS countries—the 40th anniversary of the start of the opening up of the virgin and fallow lands.

The rapid opening up and development of vast, bleak, previously unpopulated territories in Siberia, the Volga region, the Urals, Kazakhstan, and other parts of the country constituted a magnificent occurence in the life of our country and our people. In the difficult postwar conditions the country was embarking on the solution of the tremendous problem of ensuring reliable self-sufficiency in food, and first and foremost in grain.

Around 2 million young people responded to the call to open up the virgin lands. Through their persistent work and with the whole country's help a new grain-producing region was created. The practical experience of opening up the virgin lands and the fallow lands provides convincing evidence that, if people pool their efforts, success is guaranteed even in the most difficult task. That experience is especially valuable in the present, complex time. The CIS countries can overcome the crisis and resolve their complex problems quickly only if they act together in close collaboration and cooperation in all spheres.

I pay deep respect and gratitude to all who contributed to opening up the virgin and fallow lands, who devoted the best years of their lives to that cause, and who made great efforts to create prosperity for our people.

I wish you, dear comrades, good health, happiness, and new successes.

[signed] B. Yeltsin.

Unamnestied Barannikov Forced To Keep Silent

PM2503121594 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 25 Mar 94 p 1

[Aleksandr Golovenko report: "Barannikov Still Silent"]

[Text] While almost all the recent Lefortovo and Matrosskaya Tishina prisoners have given interviews following their release, Viktor Barannikov has been avoiding all contacts with the press. Perhaps this is why the all-knowing and all-understanding democratic press has not informed its readers of a fact which could, if people were so inclined, be called sensational. Namely, that the Russian Federation General Prosecutor's Office has not applied the amnesty to the former security minister. He is still under investigation.

I telephoned defense attorney D. Shteynberg yesterday:

"Viktor Pavlovich and I visited Gaydanov, the new chief of the investigations administration, and he informed us of the reason for what I would term this lawlessness."

It turns out that the Prosecutor's Office is waiting for the State Duma to adopt a decree on the procedure for applying the amnesty. This may be required for some people, but as far as the political prisoners are concerned, the Duma has already made everything perfectly clear—the amnesty is to be applied forthwith! I believe that the Prosecutor's Office is maliciously violating the constitutional principle that all are equal before the law.

Of course, the exception made for V. Barannikov could be considered an annoying misunderstanding. It could be claimed that, in the course of the struggle which A. Kazannik waged against the presidential entourage, striving to release A. Rutskoy, R. Khasbulatov, and their associates as quickly as possible, he forgot about the man in the hospital. But that explanation is one for dimwits. There is another, more likely, theory.

The "collective Rasputin" with which, we recall, the former security minister finally quarreled on the eve of his resignation has forgotten nothing and has not forgiven him. It is as if they are hinting to the recent inmate of Lefortovo, from where he was transferred to the hospital after a heart attack, that, even though now "at liberty," he is still wholly in the hands of "their man"—A. Ilyushenko—a direct presidential appointee. And this is why conclusions must be drawn.

Needless to say, it is no secret that Viktor Pavlovich knows a very great deal about the "secrets of the Kremlin court." For instance, which dollar incomes are used to educate the sons of certain highly placed grandees in prestigious foreign colleges, which of them have accounts in what bank, or which of them are involved in corruption or the trade in natural resources. He could also talk about why one of those close to the court—a fervent opponent of the CPSU—is nicknamed "Tanya."

Naturally, the amnesty will eventually be applied to V. Barannikov. But the pointed playing on the sick man's nerves points to the invisible deal that they are trying to foist on him. Something along the lines of "you keep quiet and we'll set you free."

Russian Communist Party Program Theses

PM2403114994 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 24 Mar 94 p 3

["Theses for elaborating the Communist Party of the Russian Federation Program" adopted "as a basis" by Communist Party of the Russian Federation Central Executive Committee Plenum 15 March 1994: "From Crisis to Stable Development, People's Power, and Socialism"]

[Text] **I. The Present State of Russia. A Brief Description**

The present state of Russia may be defined as general crisis enveloping the main spheres of social life—statehood and the economy, politics and culture, everyday life and morality.

The "free" market has divided society. A tiny minority is becoming fabulously rich out of plundering national wealth. While the huge majority whose labor created that wealth is reduced to poverty. The swift division is breeding a civil split and social strife. Ruthless exploitation of working people and the embezzlement of natural resources are taking place in Russia. The people have been deprived of fundamental socioeconomic and political rights. Economic crime has become the basis for all other types of crime. The criminalization of society is threatening personal and public safety. The class of a new bourgeoisie, primarily a comprador bourgeoisie, is being purposefully and swiftly formed through the destruction of the social sphere and the Russian state.

Since the forcible elimination of the soviets in September-October 1993 an authoritarian regime—a regime of personal presidential power—has been established in Russia. In effect what has been established is dictatorship by capital, which is merging with the criminal world. The corrupt state apparatus is serving the interests of mafia clans, which control much of the country's economy. The people are debarred from management and from monitoring state power.

The confrontation between the ruling regime and the huge majority of the population is deepening with every passing day. There is a ripening understanding among the masses that the general crisis enveloping Russia is the

consequence of the breakdown of the socialist system and the deliberate destruction of a unified and powerful state—the USSR.

The Soviet Union was the victim of betrayal by the ruling elite which had seized the leading posts in the CPSU and of the actions of national-separatists, who aligned themselves with the most aggressive forces of international capital, which is seeking a new repartition of the world.

The perestroyka of socialism announced by the bureaucratic CPSU elite turned out to be an adventure without precedent in the history of manipulations of mass consciousness. The so-called "new thinking" and demagoguery about "pan-human values" eroded ideas about working people's genuine interests and about the country's national, state interests. This was aided by the "radical democrats," who secured the adoption of declarations of the sovereignty of Russia and other republics and ratification of the Belovezhskaya agreements, which ignore the results of the referendum on preserving the USSR. The destruction of the Soviet Union created a threat of the disintegration of Russia, exacerbated national relations everywhere, and resulted in fratricidal civil wars. A great power was thrown onto the margins of world politics. It is increasingly becoming a raw materials appendage, a market for low-grade goods, and a source of cheap skilled manpower.

The crisis that has erupted in Russia is taking place in conditions of a world crisis. The West is seeking to escape it at the expense of our country. The weakening of Russia is to the advantage of the strategists of the new world order.

The threat of economic, political, and spiritual enslavement hangs over a great multinational community of people linked by a common historical destiny.

II. The Lessons of History and the Way Out of the Crisis

At the start of the 20th century the exacerbation of inter-imperialist contradictions led to our country's involvement in World War I contrary to its national-state interests. The October Socialist Revolution extricated Russia from that war.

Great October was a breakthrough to the future—to socialism. History demonstrated that the turn onto the path of socialist development ensured the sovereignty of the working people, the qualitative renewal of the centuries-old Russian statehood, and the salvation of Russia as a great power.

After tremendous sacrifices caused by World War I and the civil war, the party elaborated a program for stable development—it took the road of the New Economic Policy. The NEP prevented a fresh outbreak of civil war and ensured the necessary conditions for the next stages of state development: electrification and industrialization of the national economy, broad socialization of the means of production in city and countryside, and cultural revolution.

This policy underwent serious changes as a result of the external threat hanging over the USSR. The mobilization economy and the swift development of education, science, and technology enabled the country to create the necessary potential for defense from military danger. This subsequently ensured restoration of the war-ravaged economy within the shortest possible time. Social ownership and the people's selfless, heroic labor saved the country. Despite the distortions and the violations of democracy and legality, the people's masses retained and strengthened their belief in socialism.

At the same time the mobilization economy, which had demonstrated its effectiveness during the war and the restoration of the national economy, began to lag behind the demands of the scientific and technical revolution that had begun in the world. Without democratization and improvements in the management system, without the use of flexible and adaptable forms of economic activity, it became a brake on the development of many spheres of social life.

Society needed new ideas and stimulation of the creative and production activeness of individuals and labor collectives. However, the reforms launched for these purposes did not produce the expected result. Everything was stifled by the opposition of the party bureaucracy, the unpreparedness of cadres, and the inertia of mass consciousness.

Socialism's economic potential was not realized in conditions of the world technological and information revolution. The pursuit of wealth by any means, careerism, corruption, irresponsibility, and incompetence were not properly assessed in society. Private capitalist tendencies emerged in society. The exploited section of working people began to lose faith in the justice of the existing system, which devalued socialist and communist ideals in the eyes of millions. The crisis enveloping Soviet society stemmed to a considerable extent from the crisis in the CPSU, which had been the ruling party for many decades. Its theoretical activity and methods of managing the economy and the state as a whole were in particular need of renewal.

The "communist arrogance" of the leaders, who had come to believe that their position was unshakable, plunged the CPSU into the state of a "conceited party," which in turn foreshadowed its defeat. The inequality between the party "leadership" and the "grassroots" emerged increasingly clearly; the careerists became increasingly deeply isolated from the millions of Communists and from the working people. The CPSU was transformed from a mass party into an apparatus party.

The upshot of this was primarily that the CPSU, assuming responsibility for all spheres of social development, was unable to find solutions to pressing problems.

The gap between word and deed, between program promises and the fulfillment of those promises, became increasingly marked.

The errors and miscalculations made by the CPSU in the process of socialist building were presented in a distorted form by the mass media, which were in the hands of renegades and pseudo-democrats.

The consciousness of the working people's masses was thoroughly muddied by a powerful stream of denigration of Soviet history. Along with ideological and psychological indoctrination of the masses, a section of the working class was suborned for use in the political struggle against the Communists and Soviet power. As a result the majority of the working population remained indifferent to the dramatic fate of the CPSU and the soviets.

The so-called "Gorbachev perestroyka," which was ostensibly aimed at renewing socialism, deepening democracy, and overcoming the distortions and abuses, was in fact a deviation from socialism. The equality of all forms of ownership was proclaimed and the role of the most viable form—social ownership—was undermined in every way, and the essence and forms of the cooperative movement were distorted. This gave a free hand to shady capital and other antisocialist and antipeople forces opposed to the gains of October, Soviet power, and the unified union state.

During this period the conditions were created for a transition to a monopoly of private ownership and for the fusion of the new bourgeoisie and corrupt functionaries. Yeltsin's "reforms," the liberalization of prices, and the predatory privatization struck a crushing blow to the country's economy and caused chaos and disarray, total impoverishment of the people, and a slide by society toward national catastrophe. The political formalization of these actions was the August events of 1991, October 1993, and the finagling through of a constitution of private ownership and presidential autocracy via a referendum supported by a minority of voters.

The country can and must emerge from the crisis. How can this be done? This is impossible, first, without stopping the capitalization and colonization of the country, and, second, without turning toward socialism. The CPRF [Communist Party of the Russian Federation] sees three political stages in consistently resolving these tasks: a general democratic stage, people's power; the transition to socialism along with the restoration of the power of the soviets, working people's power; socialist development proper.

During the first stage Communists in alliance with the progressive patriotic movement seek the formation of a government of the people's trust. This is called upon to eliminate the catastrophic consequences of the "reforms" and to stop the slump in production. Here it is necessary to return to the population the illegally appropriated (privatized) property and to involve working people in control over production and the distribution of national wealth. During this stage the mixed economy foisted on society is retained. The government and representative organs of power ensure security and the country's independence from the colonial policy of the makers of the "new world order" and promote integration processes among the former USSR republics.

During the second stage, after relative stability has been attained, working people increasingly participate in the management of the state via soviets, strike committees, and other social organs of people's power brought forth by life. A transition to transformations based on the dominance of the socialist mode and the consistent economic elimination of private ownership begins.

The third stage of social transformations is the development of a socialist society on the basis of post-industrial and information technologies while utilizing the best domestic and world achievements of science and culture.

We see the new socialism as a society stimulating the individual's creative activeness and working people's self-management. At the same time the foundations are laid for the future—a communist association in which the free development of each will be the condition of the free development of all.

III. The Minimum Program

During the first stage, proceeding from tactical aims, the CPRF deems it necessary to implement a number of priority measures and presents these in a minimum program.

Using vigorous activity in the Russian Federation Federal Assembly and all accepted methods of extraparliamentary struggle, the CPRF will seek:

In politics

—the formation of a government of people's trust accountable to the Russian Federation Federal Assembly;
—nationwide discussion of a new constitution and its adoption by a real majority of voters;
—the adoption of a new electoral law;
—the restoration of the Soviet form of people's power;
—national accord on the basis of a renaissance of the age-old friendship of the peoples;
—the restoration of the union state by constitutional means and on a voluntary basis, beginning with denunciation of the Belovezhskaya agreements;
—the implementation of an independent foreign policy according with the country's national-state interests and its security, even including the abrogation of international treaties and agreements damaging Russia's interests and dignity.

In the economy

—a change in economic course, the abandonment of "shock therapy," and the implementation of measures

of state regulation with a view to ending the slump in production and combating inflation and unemployment;
—the reform of tax policy with a view to stimulating investment in domestic production;
—state regulation of the sale of military output on the world market;
—the elaboration of targeted programs of state support for producers for specific sectors of the national economy (primarily science-driven, high-technology production facilities);
—state support for highly productive and efficient farms in the agro-industrial complex irrespective of their forms of organization and ownership;
—state investments in modern production facilities for the processing of agricultural output;
—the priority right of commodity producers (kolkhozes, sovkhozes, joint-stock companies, farmers) to acquire controlling blocks of shares during the flotation of enterprises in the food and processing sectors of industry;
—the establishment of control by the Russian Federation Federal Assembly over the expenditure of money on major projects in order to prevent departmentalism and parochialism in forming the expenditure side of the state budget;
—the elaboration of a state program to extricate the country from the environmental crisis;
—the creation of state, regional programs to ensure employment; the definition of a package of measures to eliminate unemployment.

In the social sphere

—the restitution to Russia's citizens of guaranteed socioeconomic rights: to labor, rest, housing, free education and medical services, and a secure old age;
—the formulation and signing by the supreme organs of state power and the trade unions of an agreement on ensuring a realistic subsistence minimum for working people;
—guarantees of the preservation of working people's property;
—state support for the family, mothers, and children, the restoration of the destroyed network of preschool and young people's cultural, recuperative, and sports institutions, support for the disabled and pensioners, and the introduction of state grants for underprivileged families;
—the priority safeguarding by the state of the development of science, education, and culture at a higher standard than that of advanced countries, as used to be the case even during the difficult postwar years;
—the creation of state-guaranteed normal conditions for the life of servicemen and their families and the safeguarding of dignified living conditions for retired servicemen, first and foremost job availability;
—the restoration of state centers for youth training and employment.

In the protection of the people's personal and public safety and spiritual health

The CPRF advocates the peaceful development of revolution but will not be indifferent to violence against the working people or the flouting of human and civil rights. It has supported and will support civil resistance and disobedience toward illegality and tyranny, utilizing all forms of nonviolent resistance. It will seek:

—the restoration, through the mediums of public education and enlightenment and the mass media, of the prestige of honest, voluntary labor and a creative attitude to things in general, to the traditions of community and Russian collectivism, and to the Russian language and the culture of the peoples of Russia, which are the basis and medium for spiritual interethnic communication and mutual enrichment;
—an end to the policy of implanting westernism and Americanism, historical vandalism, and the cult of profit, violence, and depravity;
—the prohibition of the propagation of ideological revanchism and political vengeance;
—an end to the denigration of Soviet history and the memory and teaching of V.I. Lenin;
—the suppression of crime and the toughening of punitive measures against people engaged in the theft of property, corruption, speculation, banditry, and the selling off of the country's natural and intellectual resources;
—the adoption of laws to intensify the struggle against organized crime, to protect witnesses and judges, and to provide social guarantees for law-enforcement agency staffers.

IV. The CPRF Is a Party of State Patriotism and Social Justice

The CPRF is a party of the working people. Its traces its lineage through the Russian Social Democratic Workers Party, the Russian Social Democratic Workers Party (Bolsheviks), the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and the Communist Party of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic. The CPRF takes on board everything of value from the past experience of the Russian and world communist movement, which is enabling it to take shape as a self-renewing party of working people seeking to provide answers to the most acute problems currently arising for society.

In the current specific historical conditions the CPRF utilizes nonviolent methods for changing social life and opposes developments which could lead to civil war. The fatherland will be saved by an effective alliance of progressive state-patriotic forces.

The CPRF expresses and defends the interests of hired labor, the overwhelming majority of whom are industrial and agricultural workers. The program being formulated by the party is intended to become a document for working people to determine the direction of their life so

they can say, as during Lenin's time: "Here we have our comrades, our brothers, here we have our common cause."

The strengthening of the alliance of workers, peasants, and the intelligentsia and the solidarity of working people of all nationalities is not history but an insistent requirement of the present day.

The working class will fulfill its historic mission if it is aware of the vital need for society to emerge on the path of socialist development. If it heads up a people-wide, nationwide movement for Russia's independence and integrity and for the restoration of the union state. It is the CPRF's duty to give it every assistance here.

The disintegration of the Soviet Union and the destruction of the state and economic foundations of the Russian Federation have led primarily to social vulnerability for working people. The establishment in the country of the omnipotence of mafia comprador capital, for whom the motherland is a commodity, has also hit the interests of the small stratum of patriotically minded private property owners and civil servants

In present-day conditions the CPRF defines state patriotism as the ideal of a Great Russia, the ideal of restoring a Soviet union state and acquiring reliable allies beyond its borders.

The CPRF considers that the strengthening of the nationwide patriotic ideal is only demonstrated when it is combined with the socialist ideal.

V. The CPRF Is a Party Advocating an Alliance of Communist Parties and Unity of Action by All Communists

The CPRF is an independent party which has defined its path to the future as the path of the nonviolent transition of society to a socialist condition.

The CPRF considers that the communist parties active in the former union republics are independent political organizations. The CPRF advocates an equal and strong alliance among them and regards this as an essential precondition for the restoration of the union state.

The CPRF advocates cooperation among the communist parties active in the Russian Federation on condition of their recognition of the restoration of the union state on a voluntary basis; the restoration of the Soviet state system; the inadmissibility of political extremism in any form; noninterference in intraparty affairs and inadmissibility of abuse against one another; and unity of action in fulfilling the commitments assumed by each side. The CPRF does not permit double membership—the presence in its ranks of members of another party with its own program and statutes.

The CPRF is a party of creative Marxism and progressive social thinking and advocates the constant exchange of ideas and experience.

The CPRF sets the following as priority tasks for its activity inside and outside the party:"

—the organizational strengthening of the party, starting with its foundation—primary party organizations;
—the ensuring of party discipline on the basis of equality and moral relations among party members;
—the giving of moral and material assistance to the older generation of the CPRF—CPSU veterans;
—the expansion of the reserve of party activists and activist party supporters;
—participation in elections to organs of supreme and local power and organs of local self-government;
—maximum utilization of the party's factions in the Federal Assembly and local organs of power and self-government to protect the interests of hired labor;
—the ensuring of a CPRF presence in all spheres of social life;
—the maximum utilization of legal forms of work in labor collectives;
—the conducting of actions in defense of rights to support the just demands of labor collectives and all working people;
—the implementation of measures of social assistance to deprived people;
—the defense of civil and human rights when they are violated in the Russian Federation and nearby and distant foreign countries;
—the scientific and ethical protection of the fatherland's history and its Soviet period;
—participation in various forms of nationwide people's patriotic movements for the restoration of the friendship of the peoples and the union state.

The CPRF retains the red color of its banner and the symbol of working people's unity—the hammer and sickle.

The CPRF's slogan is: "Russia, labor, people's power, socialism."

The theses were adopted as a basis at a CPRF Central Executive Committee plenum on 15 March 1994. The text was finalized taking account of proposals received from the commission approved by the plenum with the following membership: Comrades Belov, Zorkaltsev, Zyuganov, Kosolapov, Kuptsov, Lukyanov, Melnikov, Osadchiy, Slavin, Tsiku, and Shabanov.

Economic Issues

Government Discusses 1994 Social, Economic Forecasts

LD2403130494 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1220 GMT 24 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Ivan Ivanov]

[Text] Moscow March 24 TASS—The decline in Russian production for 1994 will amount to 12 per cent, and consumer prices will rise by five times, according to the

Russian Government's social and economic forecasts for 1994, discussed by the government presidium on Thursday. The report is intended to be sent to the State Duma as an accompaniment to the draft federal budget.

Aleksandr Shokhin, the main speaker at today's meeting, reported that the Economics Ministry had prepared four main types of forecasts. The first forecast is called inertial-adaptational, implying the virtual continuation of the present state of the economy.

The second envisages strict monetary policy, characterized by the activation of market mechanisms, the lowering of inflation, and the continuation of the sharp decline in production.

The third forecasts active fundamental restructuring, which presupposes the creation of a foundation for the implementation of basic economic restructuring, with inflation higher than it is at present, and with less financial balance.

Shokin considers the fourth alternative the best. It supposes a policy of active economic stabilisation, accompanied by moderately strict monetary policy and designed for a two-front fight against inflation, by limiting state expenditures and by selective stimulation of production.

The advantages of the fourth alternative stem from the state's limited financial resources for implementing qualitative structural reforms this year. It is, in effect, based on selective support for highly-effective state enterprises, on the financing of quick-return investment projects, and also on widening the sources of financing for the social sphere, especially concerning housing.

According to the government's fourth forecast, Russia's gross national product (GNP) might fall by eight per cent, and industrial production might decline by 12 per cent. Overall agricultural produce would fall by seven per cent, production of energy resources, by four per cent. This variant forecasts a five to six per cent unemployment rate, which translates to about three million unemployed russians. The average growth of consumer prices would be 12 to 13 per cent a month, falling to 7 to 9 per cent monthly by the end of 1994.

According to this prognosis, out of a 745 trillion rouble gnp, 3.9 per cent would be spent on state investments, three percent on state subsidies, 1.6 per cent on state expenditure on science and research, and five per cent of the GNP would be devoted to defense expenditures.

Shokhin announced that the government's forecast for 1994 under a policy of active economic stabilisation was fairly optimistic and oriented towards resolving the main problems of economic reforms and getting the maximum use out of reform's advantages as soon as possible. Therefore, he concluded, such a task would be difficult, but completely realistic.

Government Reports on Budget Outturn in First Quarter

PM2403122794 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 24 Mar 94 p 1

[Igor Petrov report: "The Budget Is Creaking, but Not Breaking. Implementation of the Federal Budget in the First Quarter of 1994 Analyzed"]

[Text] The Russian Government has analyzed the conduct of the budget policy in the first quarter of this year and sent a note on the matter to the State Duma. This document notes in particular that state expenditure was funded mainly from tax revenue to the tune of 8.5 trillion rubles [R] and Central Bank credits to cover the deficit totaling R7.5 trillion. The issue of state securities provided the budget with R1.1 trillion. Another R1.6 trillion was collected from additional sources.

As of 15 March, R13.1 trillion out of the R17.6 trillion expected during the first quarter had been allocated from the federal budget to fund expenditure.

A priority sphere of state policy in the sphere of expenditure was the funding of measures ensuring the social protection of the population, and also giving support to individual sectors of the national economy. According to preliminary data, in the first quarter industry received R909 billion; R969 billion went into state investments; R1,109 billion into social and cultural measures; R3,627 billion into defense; and R1,077 billion into the law enforcement organs. Territorial budgets received considerable support—R2,080 billion.

Moreover government experts note that the 1994 budget is being implemented in the face of continuing negative trends in the economy: The decline in production is continuing, and reciprocal unpaid debts are increasing. For these reasons, tax payers are delaying the transfer of funds into the federal budget. During January-February, payments to the tune of R4.7 trillion came into the treasury. In March the total will not exceed R3.3 trillion.

The extreme strain on the budget can in many respects be attributed to the poor financial discipline displayed not only by enterprises but also by certain Federation components. Thus, in January 1994 Bashkiria's [Bashkortostan's] arrears to the treasury were R52 billion, Tataria's [Tatarstan's]—R37 billion, and Yakutia's—R32 billion. Apart from that, over R20 billion of income from foreign economic activity was paid into territorial budgets, whereas these funds should have been paid into the federal budget in their entirety.

According to the Finance Ministry specialists, the implementation of the budget in the first quarter can be called more or less stable. Neither the government nor the State Duma adopted decisions which might "blow up" the expenditure entries. This enabled the financiers not to go beyond the limits of the credit emission established by presidential edict back in 1993. At the same time, admittedly, it must be borne in mind that despite the

promise given by the head of the Cabinet to settle accounts fully with the peasants and defense industry workers in terms of last year's debts (R4.6 trillion), it did not prove possible to do so.

Millions of Russians have experienced for themselves the results of the moderately tough credit-monetary policy and the government's fairly successful maneuvers between the threats and demands of sectoral and regional lobbyists—primarily through the reduction in the rate of inflation. As compared with January, the increase in prices in February-March fell to a record low of 9.9 percent. For the first time the increase in wages, which reached 10 percent in February, overtook inflation.

The Finance Ministry experts call the relative regulation of the funding of the social sphere a second achievement. This should be understood to include the prompt payment of wages to people whose work is funded from the budget, a growth in social allowances for children and invalids, and support for institutions of higher education. It is noted in addition that the majority of expenditure on the social sphere is borne by local budgets, whose state is far from the optimum. The discrepancy between the local and federal income and expenditure entries in budgets is often the reason for "failures" in funding, which causes people rightful dissatisfaction.

Statistics Committee Report for Jan-Feb 1994

PM2403120594 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 24 Mar 94 p 3

[Unattributed report: "Almost 25 Million Russian Citizens Below Poverty Line. Russian Federation State Committee for Statistics Reports on Country's Socioeconomic Position in January-February 1994"]

[Text] **Macroeconomic Indicators**

Basic Indicators Characterizing Results for January-February

	A	B	C	D	E
	Jan-Feb 1994	Jan-Feb 1994 as percentage of corresponding period in 1993	Feb 1994 as percentage of corresponding period in 1993	Feb 1994 as percentage of Jan 1994	For comparison purposes: Jan-Feb 1993 as percentage of Jan-Feb 1992
Economic indicators:					
Gross domestic product, trillion rubles	58-60	82-83	—	—	—
Industrial output, trillion rubles	34	76.4	75.9	102.3	79.6
Consumer goods production, trillion rubles	9.5	73.1	73.3	113	87.0
including:					
Food	4.3	82.8	80.7	97	92
Alcoholic beverages	0.7	53.3	48.3	87	96.5
Nonfood commodities	4.5	68.6	71.8	113	82.8
Total retail turnover, trillion rubles *	24	99.6	96.4	96.3	111.3
including officially registered trading enterprises	12.5	94.3	93.8	98.3	107.2
Total volume of paid services, trillion rubles *	2.6	57.9	57.7	94.9	74.9
including officially registered service enterprises	1.6	51.5	51.3	92.4	73.9
Total exports, billion U.S. dollars	5.5	101.2	101.0	115.9	103.7
Total imports, billion U.S. dollars	2.6	79.2	80.9	136.2	59.0
Industrial manufacturers' price index	137	7.8	7.5	116	9.9

	A	B	C	D	E
	Jan-Feb 1994	Jan-Feb 1994 as percentage of corresponding period in 1993	Feb 1994 as percentage of corresponding period in 1993	Feb 1994 as percentage of Jan 1994	For comparison purposes: Jan-Feb 1993 as percentage of Jan-Feb 1992
Social Indicators:					
Real disposable monetary income	—	—	110-113	—	—
Number of population with income below minimum subsistence level (February), millions	24.8	—	62	47	—
as percentage of population	16.7	—	—	—	—
Average wage, thousand rubles (February)	approx 150	—	x7.9	approx110	x9.2 #
Operating index of consumer prices of goods, services ##	133 **	—	x8	110	x11.1#

* Cited data for volume of sale of consumer goods and services to population allow for expert evaluation of sale volumes at unregistered enterprises and also for informal importing and sale of consumer goods by private individuals
** February 1994 against December 1993
# February 1993 as percentage of February 1992
Calculated on basis of weekly price surveys in 132 Russian cities

Foreign Economic Activity

Foreign economic ties with distant foreign countries. In January-February 1994 Russia's foreign trade turnover (excluding CIS countries) totaled $8.1 billion, down 7.2 percent at current prices on January-February 1993.

Russian exports totaled $5.5 billion, a rise of 1.2 percent, including $3.1 billion to industrially developed countries (up 0.4 percent), $0.8 billion to developing countries (up 8.6 percent), and $1.6 billion to other countries (former CEMA countries, China, DPRK, republics of former Yugoslavia, Baltic republics), down 0.4 percent on January-February 1993.

Exports of oil totaled 11.5 million tonnes in January-February 1994 (99 percent of the same period last year); natural gas—21.8 billion cubic meters (122 percent); petroleum products—3.6 million tonnes (115 percent), coal—2.2 million 7onnes (117 percent), iron ore—1.5 million tonnes (266 percent), mineral fertilizers—2.0 million tonnes (138 percent), round timber—957,000 cubic meters (82 percent), cast iron—307,000 tonnes (158 percent. Exports of machinery and equipment totaled $228 million, down 36 percent.

Average export prices of virtually all basic exports dropped: oil and petroleum products, gas, nitrogenous and potash fertilizers, pulp and paper, nonferrous metals (down 10-30 percent). Prices of coal, ammonia, lumber, and cast iron rose 5-15 percent.

In January-February 1994 Russian imports totaled $2.6 billion, down 21 percent on January-February last year, including $1.5 billion from industrially developed countries (down 9 percent), $0.4 billion from developing countries (down 43 percent), and $0.7 billion from other countries (down 24 percent compared with January-February 1993).

In this period 7,000 tonnes of quick-frozen meat were imported (54 percent down on January-February 1993), along with 10,700 tonnes of citrus fruits (down 69 percent), 642,000 tonnes of grain (down 58 percent), 45,000 tonnes of raw sugar (down 84 percent), $37 million worth of knitwear (down 40 percent), $82 million worth of fabric clothing (down 46 percent), 895,000 pairs of leather footwear (down 85 percent), and $55 million worth of medicines (last year's level). Imports of machinery and equipment totaled $829 million, a rise of 4 percent. They accounted for 32 percent of all imports.

Russia had a foreign trade surplus of $2.9 billion in January-February 1994 ($2.1 billion in January-February 1993).

On the money markets the ruble-dollar rate of exchange continued to fall in February. At the beginning of the month the rate was 1,560 rubles to the dollar, but by the end of the month the figure has risen to 1,659. The situation was determined by steady inflationary expectations, the main factor in the fall in the ruble rate

Exports of primary fuel resources to nearby foreign countries. The following amounts of the most important categories of fuel were exported to nearby foreign countries in January-February this year:

	A	B	C	D	E
	Exported in Jan-Feb 1994	Jan-Feb 1994 as percentage of Jan-Feb 1993	Exported in Feb 1994	Feb 1994 as percentage of Feb 1993	Feb 1994 as percentage of Jan 1994
Oil, million tonnes	4.3	50	1.6	41	61
Gas, billion cubic meters	12.0	95	5.8	97	94

The main customers for Russia's oil and gas are Ukraine, which accounts for 50 and 60 percent respectively of total exports to the CIS countries, Belorussia [Belarus] (21 and 25 percent), and Kazakhstan (20 and 1 percent) [figures as published]. Exports to these states in January-February this year were:

A	B	C	D	E	F	
	Ukraine: Jan-Feb 1994	Ukraine: Jan-Feb 1994 as percentage of Jan-Feb 1993	Belorussia: Jan-Feb 1994	Belorussia: Jan-Feb 1994 as percentage of Jan-Feb 1993	Kazakhstan: Jan-Feb 1994	Kazakhstan: Jan-Feb 1994 as percentage of Jan-Feb 1993
Oil, million tonnes	2.1	65	0.9	41	0.8	42
Gas, billion cubic meters	8.2	96	3.0	89	0.2	87

Considerable volumes of oil and gas respectively are also sent to Uzbekistan and Moldavia (8 and 6 percent respectively of total exports of these commodities to CIS countries).

Military & Nuclear Issues

Details of Collision Between Nuclear Subs

LD2403164594 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1554 GMT 24 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents]

[Text] Moscow/Murmansk March 24 TASS—Two Russian nuclear submarines of the Northern Fleet collided on Wednesday in the Barents Sea while practicing correlated maneuvering. The press service of the Russian Navy qualified the incident as "a contact" of two U-boats.

Nobody was injured, the armaments and equipment of the submarines are in due order and the radioactive situation is normal, the press service said on Thursday, adding that the subs returned to their base independently.

It was earlier reported that the "contact" resulted in "inconsiderable damage" which poses no danger to either the personnel or the environment. A source in the Northern Fleet headquarters told TASS that both subs were submerged when one of them, on her way to the surface, "touched" the other sub. The source described the damage as "minor", adding that both vessels were returning to the base without surfacing.

Ministry, Primorye Region Clash Over Nuclear Waste

LD2503103594 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0331 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] A statement by the administration of the Primorye region that next week it may take an independent decision on release of liquid radioactive waste into the Sea of Japan seems to be based on "mercantile interests," a high-ranking diplomat in the Russian Foreign Ministry told Interfax on Thursday.

"Accusing Moscow of forgetting the problem of the use of liquid radioactive waste, the Primorye administration is seeking to put psychological pressure on the Japanese and to get the money from them as soon as possible," the diplomat said.

He said the statement was not a surprise for the Russian Foreign Ministry. "The Primorye administration had made it clear even before that it wants on its own to be able to handle the money which the Japanese agreed to provide for the construction of the liquid nuclear waste deposits and reprocessing facilities," the diplomat said.

He noted particularly that negotiations with the Japanese on the construction of nuclear waste deposits and facilities for its reprocessing are going on "in a constructive way." "What does not suit the Primorye administration then?—Perhaps, only the fact that the money will go not directly to it, but through the center, i.e. through Moscow," the diplomat suggested.

Kokoshin on Financial Plight of Defense Ministry

LD2403221294 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1930 GMT 24 Mar 94

[From the "Slavyanka" program of the Russian Defense Ministry]

[Text] Andrey Kokoshin, Russian first deputy defense minister, has declared that the results of the financing of the Defense Ministry in the first quarter show that the situation regarding the revenue part of the budget is deteriorating.

The state's debts to suppliers of defense equipment and to servicemen today have reached 3 trillion rubles. In February and March, 70 percent of servicemen received no monetary remuneration. According to Kokoshin, the Defense Ministry favors joint efforts by the executive and legislative authorities to increase the revenue part of the budget.

Kasatonov Views Current Naval Tasks

LD2403161794 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1313 GMT 24 Mar 94

["Exclusive" report No. 11 of 24 March]

[Text] Career officers in Russia are currently quite concerned by the absence of prescribed strength of army units and by what many believe to be insufficient financing of the Armed Forces. Sergey Safronov of INTERFAX discussed the problems of the Russian navy with Deputy Supreme Commander of the Navy Admiral Igor Kasatonov.

INTERFAX: The economic decline in Russia continues. How will it effect the combat capability of the navy?

KASATONOV: The navy as an operational-strategic formation guaranteeing the defence capability of the country is extremely dependent on the state of the national economy, primarily on industrial production and the many-tier cooperation between numerous Russian companies. It so happens that components for many goods, including high tech, were manufactured in different parts of the former USSR. Therefore the collapse of the Soviet Union largely influenced the navy.

During the first two years after the disintegration of the country the navy remained afloat following its old strategic doctrine, even though some changes had to be made in it. The maintenance of the strong Northern and Pacific fleets performing oceanic tasks was the main concern while the Baltic and Black Sea Fleets were meant for regional purposes.

INTERFAX:What political consequences did the disappearance of the USSR have for the navy?

KASATONOV: The collapse of the Soviet Union resulted in the loss of the strategic space, the appearance of local naval formations. Thus in the Baltic Russia now has two isolated areas of deployment. The situation on the Black sea is even more complicated. There a significant share of the fleet—an exceptional gain of the Russian people—has been divided between Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova (in the latter case the admiral meant the Black Sea-Danube flotilla. - INTERFAX).

For centuries the Russian navy worked to conquer an appropriate strategic space which allowed to guarantee the security of the state. The goal was achieved and the strategic space used to include what now constitutes the newly-independent countries. And they do not seem to need our navy...

Russia has been left with only a small part of its old strategic space which does not guarantee the necessary security of the country. I think that from this viewpoint the interests of our great power were damaged, because most of our closest neighbors resist agreements on joint defence. In others, like Georgia for example, the political situation is not sufficiently stable.

In my opinion, in this respect Russia is facing considerable difficulties with organizing defence. Such problems must be resolved diplomatically on the basis of international law. In case compromise is impossible and old ties cannot be restored, Russia will have to act proceeding only from its own interests. To resolve these questions the Russian leadership should demonstrate wisdom and realize who is our true friend. I think the problem will be resolved, but not today.

INTERFAX: Which of the Russian fleets is the strongest today?

KASATONOV: The North Fleet is the closest to the prescribed strength. It forms the bulk of the strategic naval force which is an element the Russian nuclear triad. To a considerable extent it guarantees the defence of Russian interests in the northern direction. The fleet is an important deterrent for the possible aggressor.

Even though Russia and the USA have become partners in principle, regular contacts and even collisions with American submarines off the coast of North Russia indicate that the American navy has not left our waters. The fact that foreign subs move near the Russian coast, the Kola peninsula, for example, while Russian subs are not moving near Florida or California cannot help worrying us military people.

Foreign nuclear submarines regularly appear off the Russian coast in the Far East as well. We are keeping statistics of these instances. An analysis of the information shows that unfortunately foreign navies have kept their combat means and combat formations.

INTERFAX: There was a time when this country renounced the construction of aircraft-carriers and concentrated on nuclear submarines. Now Russia is building aircraft-carrying ships. What is the strategy of the Russian navy for the future?

KASATONOV: The Soviet leadership proceeded from the principle of balanced development of the navy believing that the force should be ready to carry out any task. However, the approach to the future was quite subjective and depended on the person who headed the state, the Defence Ministry or navy. As a result, in my

opinion, the navy was weakened from the viewpoint of combat means. The situation was even worse in auxiliary forces.

It is true that the USSR gave preference to submarines even though national interests also required the construction of aircarft-carriers. Most countries do not make such giants, actually only the USA can afford such a luxury. Many countries prefer making ships of the intermediate class that can take on jump jets and helicopters.

Only in the late 80s the Soviet Union recognized the need to have aircraft-carriers. The Admiral Kuznetsov has been built, the Varyag is 85

ready and launched. However, the situation with the latter is complicated as the Varyag is in foreign territory - Ukraine. There are many Russians in that country as well as those who truly love Russia and find the split between our two nations a mistake. Nevertheless, no one can tell whether the Varyag will be completed or not.

As for strategy, I can say that in the future the Russian Federation will make ships of the same class with the displacement of 10 to 12 thousand tons as well as 4 to 5 thousand ton ships. The submarine fleet will also develop. But all that is going to happen in keeping with international agreements.

INTERFAX: Let's return to the Black Sea Fleet. We would want to know your opinion of the recent statement by the Supreme Commander of the Ukrainian Navy Admiral Beskaravainy about the need to divide the fleet.

KASATONOV: The Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk signed a document stating that Kiev is surrendering its part of the fleet to Russia as payment for its debts. Therefore the declarations of other persons contradicting this document are empty rhetoric, as the political decision has been made already.

The saddest thing about it is that the main base of the fleet, Sevastopol, is degrading. Like in besieged Leningrad people carry water in buckets and sit in the light of oil lamps in the evenings.

INTERFAX: But can the statement of the Ukrainian admiral indicate a change in the official attitude of Kiev to the fleet?

KASATONOV: Plenty of declarations can be made, but the people of the Crimea have expressed their will: the overwhelming majority voted for Yuri Meshkov in the elections of the Crimean president. (Yuri Meshkov is a supporter of stronger ties between the Crimea and Russia. - Interfax). Ukraine is also heading for elections, therefore one should be more careful with political declarations and heed the opinion of women standing in lines at food stores.

INTERFAX: In the Soviet Union it was not customary to admit the existence of naval bases abroad even though we had them at least in Vietnam and Cuba. Does Russia have overseas naval bases?

KASATONOV: I would like to stress that Russia does not have overseas naval bases as such. There are only so-called logistical points. One of them is in Camranh, Vietnam. By the way we are keeping it largely at the insistence of the Vietnamese side. In general the Russian military doctrine abroad does not provide for the formation of any overseas bases.

You probably know that the USA, Britain and other countries are also cutting on bases abroad. The situation in the world is such that there is no need for them. Hopefully other NATO countries will give up military bases too.

INTERFAX: Why is Vietnam interested in keeping Russian presence in Camranh?

KASATONOV: Vietnam as well as many other countries realizes the importance of Russia in world politics, in resolving economic matters. A number of countries relies on Russian machinery and technology in their economies and these ties cannot be severed just like that. This also applies to former Soviet republics.

INTERFAX: Does the Russian navy intend to cooperate with the navies of NATO countries?

KASATONOV: Such cooperation is a reality already. Between March 23 and 25 the United States, Britain, Netherlands, Norway and the Russian Federation conducted joint naval exercises in the Barents sea. Norway was in charge of overall command. The purpose was to exercise joint actions to search and rescue people out at sea, joint maneuvering and communications.

INTERFAX: Recently ships of the Black Sea Fleet carried out a combat mission on the coast of Georgia when hostilities were under way in West Georgia between government troops and supporters of the former president Zviad Gamsakhurdia. The question of opening a Russian naval base in Poti, Georgia was raised then.

KASATONOV: The question can be decided only when the situation in Georgia stabilizes. At the moment political and economic conditions in Georgia are such, that the presence of the Black Sea Fleet there would not meet the interests of Russia. No one is working in the city, there is no food, only large-scale looting. What interests can Russia have there?

Report on Destruction of Chemical Weapons Arsenal

LD2403233194

[Editorial Report] Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian at 2020 GMT on 24 March carries a two-minute video report by A. Peslyak in the "Vesti" newscast on Russia's destruction of its chemical weapons.

Peslyak begins by recapping Russia's international commitment to destroy its chemical weapons and to discontinue their production. He reports on the debate on this topic in the State Duma on 24 March. The main problem was storage of the weapons until they could be destroyed. The video shows the Duma being addressed by Major General Yuriy Tarasevich, deputy head of the chemical defense troops of the Russian Federation, who said: "You must understand that we cannot do anything about the storage areas themselves. Therefore we are saying at the present time that the most dangerous situation has arisen in these two arsenals we have. That's in (Kompapino) and especially in Gornyy, Saratov Oblast."

Peslyak says that the Defense Ministry was asking for half a billion dollars to finance the destruction of the weapons. The video then showed an excerpt of an interview with V. Nikonov, deputy chairman of the State Duma Committee on International Affairs, identified by caption, who says: "The means of eliminating the chemical weapons has yet to be decided upon. The sites where the destruction of the chemical weapons is to take place have yet to be chosen. As you can see from the hearing, the settling of these matters with local authorities and, moreover, with local inhabitants is running into considerable difficulties."

Peslyak points out that a factory in Chapayevsk equipped with ultra-modern technology was standing idle when it could be used for destroying chemical weapons. Video shows the exterior and interior of a factory, with its machinery wrapped in plastic sheeting. No one was taking responsibility for this, he says; it is difficult to know just how much toxic material there is to be destroyed, saying there could be "40,000, 80,000 or 400,000 tonnes."

Gromov, Toporov Said at Risk in New Reform

MK2503091094 Moscow MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS in Russian 25 Mar 94 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Will You Be the Third One? 'Olympic' Cut in the Armed Forces"]

[Text] The defense minister is soon likely to cut the number of his deputies from seven to four. Generals Gromov and Toporov are running the risk of being the first among those to be axed.

Observers think that Boris Gromov—one of the most likely contenders for the position of minister if it becomes vacant—is thus being "taken out of the game." Who the third one will be is yet unknown.

Radical reforms in the ministry have long been expected. The deputies—Generals Toporov and Mironov—have long been gradually vacating the fifth floor where Pavel Grachev's office is located. As for Boris Gromov's office, it is in an altogether different building.

In principle, no defense minister before Gen. Grachev had such a number of deputies.

Federal Assembly

CBW Official Informs Parliament on Weapons

LD2403174294 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1459 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] Deputy head of Russian forces for nuclear, chemical and biological defences General Yuriy Tarasevich speaking in parliament put the country's stockpile of chemical weapons subject to destruction under an international convention at 40,000 tons. These are deployed at seven different sites and must be destroyed within a period of ten years.

He said that chemical weapons causing a blistering effect were among the first to be destroyed at two sites in the villages of Kamarka (Udmurtia) and Gorny (Saratov Region). Tarasevich said the operation would cost Rbl [rubles] 500 Bn [billion] at last year's prices. The total spending for the destruction of all chemical weapons runs at Rbl 2.5 Tn [trillion]. However, Tarasevich declined to say whether Russia was engaged in the development of new-generation chemical weapons on the grounds that this should be "the subject of a special session."

Head of the Foreign Ministry's arms control department Oleg Sokolov said it would be in Russia's interests to become one of the first of 65 signatories to ratify the convention on the destruction of chemical weapons. He said "negative implications from Russia's failure to do so are obvious."

For his part, chemical scientist Vil Mirzayanov who was also involved in the hearings told reporters that Russia had offered to destroy 40,000 tons of chemical weapons though it had produced more than 400,000 tons. In his view, the remainder was destroyed in a barbarous way without any elementary precautionary measures being taken, which in itself "is just as dangerous as the use of the weapon itself." To begin with, an international commission of experts must be set up to find where and how those weapons were buried, he said. Mirzayanov called for extending the destruction period from 25 to 30 years given the enormous spending involved.

Toxic Scrapping 'Concept' Developed

LD2403150994 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1357 GMT 24 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Anatoliy Yurkin]

[Excerpt] Moscow March 24 TASS—[passage omitted] ITAR-TASS was told by Major-General Yuriy Tarasevich, assistant commander of radiation, chemical and biological defence forces of the Russian Federation, who took part in the deliberations, that a concept has already been drawn up for scrapping combat toxic substances, but this required special financing. Shortage of money for the development of special technologies, construction of various installations and other jobs, envisaged by

the complex programme, retards the implementation of the already adopted decisions.

General Tarasevich believes that this year will be decisive for preparations to begin the planned destruction of chemical weapons. He denied rumours and publications on the alleged "incineration of chemical shells". "All the ammunition is being reliably guarded and poses no threat to the environment," Tarasevich said. He believes they could remain stored for several more years. "It would be wrong to shift the difficult job of destroying them to the next generation. There is every opportunity to do it now, relying on international agreements," Tarasevich noted.

Regional Affairs

Talks With Chechnya Suspended

LD2403150094 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1350 GMT 24 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Tamara Zamyatina]

[Text] Moscow, 24 Mar—At a meeting between Sergey Filatov, head of the Russian president's administration, and Aslambek Akbulatov, Chechen secretary of state, the Chechen side broke the preliminary agreement to the effect that recognizing the republic as a constituent part of the Russian Federation would be a condition for the talks, Filatov told an ITAR-TASS correspondent today.

In addition, according to the head of the presidential administration, recognizing the bilateral accord between the federal authorities and Tatarstan as a general basis was yet another condition for starting talks between Russia and Chechnya. Instead, the Chechen side put forward its own version of the treaty, Filatov stated. At that point the meeting was suspended. The talks can be resumed only if the above conditions are accepted, the head of presidential administration stressed.

Also, Filatov noted that the Chechen side had proposed to hold a meeting between Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Chechen leader Dzhokhar Dudayev. The meeting would be premature until fundamental issues are solved, he believes.

Ingush President Appeals for Calm, Restraint

LD2403202094 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1923 GMT 24 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vadim Byrkin]

[Text] Moscow March 24 TASS—Ingush President Ruslan Aushev called upon the residents of the republic to remain calm and restraint. The appeal followed a series of recent incidents which have increased tension in the zone of the state of emergency, the press service of the Ingush embassy in Moscow said on Thursday.

The press service said that in one such incident a Russian Interior Ministry senior officer, identified only as Colonel Sibirtsev, received heavy bodily injuries after the convoy of trucks he was accompanying was attacked by residents of the village of Chermen in the Prigorod district. They used sticks, rods and stones to attack the trucks which carried Ingush refugees. As a result, seven people, including women and children, received injuries of various degrees [no punctuation as received]

The press service also cited cases of mortar shelling of Ingush homes in Chermen on Wednesday [23 March] and last night. No casualties were reported.

"These planned and directed provocations aim at pushing the Ingush people for a new bloodshed," Aushev said.

Russian Troops Relocated From Transcaucasus

LD2403091594 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0813 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] Stavropol March 24 ITAR-TASS—Russia is relocating border troops from the Transcaucasus to a new, special border district with the center in Stavropol, established in Russia's south by the presidential decree.

N. Ossetian Parliament Seeks Extension of Emergency

LD2403163194 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1451 GMT 24 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Valeriy Shanayev]

[Text] Vladikavkaz March 24 TASS—At its session today, the North Ossetian republican parliament paid attention to the extension of the state of emergency on part of the republic's territory. Due to the prolonged tense situation along its border with Ingushetia and incessant attacks on factories, plants, military units and police posts by armed bandit gangs, the parliament resolved to request the president of the Russian Federation and the Federal Assembly to extend the emergency situation in the Mozdo, Pravoberezhnoy and Prigorodnoy districts and part of the settlements near the city of Vladikavkaz.

Addressing the session, North Ossetian President Akhsarbek Galazov, said that in particular, Russia has already spent over 100 billion roubles to support the emergency situation. But the situation in the zone of conflict is complicated, there are conditions which lead to its further aggravation, the refugee and hostage problems remain unresolved and the local population in the region possesses a lot of arms. Currently Russian peacekeeping forces are the guarantor of security in the zone of conflict.

Akhsarbek Galazov reaffirmed his initiative to hold a meeting with Ingusetian President Ruslan Aushev aimed at discussing a settlement between their two republics. But this meeting must be well-prepared, he emphasised.

Siberian Regional Groups Want Economic Freedom

MK2403124094 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 24 Mar 94 p 2

[Dmitriy Kuznets report under the "Drawing the Lines" rubric: "Regions Demand Division of Powers"]

[Text] In Tambov, representatives of the regional associations "Black Earth Region," "Siberian Accord," "Central Region," "Northwest," "Northern Caucasus," and "The Urals" signed yesterday a general agreement, compiled by themselves, between the government and the above regional groups.

The document in the form of yet another petition is expected to reach Viktor Chernomyrdin's desk soon. Should the Russian premier add his signature to it, the regions would finally secure a clear delimitation of powers of the Federation components and the Federal government in the budget, taxation, and foreign policy spheres.

The conference participants announced that the agreement would replace the separate treaties each Federation component has with the center. Sergey Shakhray, who attended the conference and who is regarded, according to some information, as the mastermind of the agreement, stated that the ideal option would be for the oblast and local budgets to absorb up to 75 percent of the public revenues.

A draft agreement lobby was created in the form of a coordination council which will "have its representatives in the central organs of power and directly transfer to the regions the powers they are going to procure." It is known from recent history, however, that it is not going to be easy for the regions to get the powers—even despite the fact that Sergey Shakhray is prepared to sacrifice for the agreement the government careers of four ministers, members of the Party of Russian Unity and Accord.

Official Condemns Kalmykia Decision on Constitution

LD2303150294 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1302 GMT 23 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Tamara Zamyatina]

[Text] Moscow March 23 TASS—Kalmykian President Kirsan Ilyumzhinov's decision to abrogate the republic's constitution and to recognise that only Russia's Constitution operates in the republic's territory is undemocratical and is far from consolidating the federation, believes Leonid Smirnyagin, member of the Presidential Council.

Smirnyagin, a permanent expert on regional policies, told ITAR-TASS that under the Russian Constitution subjects of the federation have no right to alter a region's status unilaterally. Moreover, such acts by republics' politicians destroy the federation.

If such a step were taken, this would mean violation of the principles of state structure of Russian Federaion, Smirnyagin said. He said he is amazed at Ilyumzhinov's intention to implement his idea without discussing it with Kalmykia's population and without holding a referendum.

Commenting on possible political motives of the Kalmykian leader, the member of the Presidential Council recalled Ilyumzhinov's unsavoury role in the autumn in last year when he virtually backed those who unleashed bloody events in Moscow. "Probably the Kalmykian leader by his awkward initiative now tries to please Moscow and get absolved of his sin," Smirnyagin notes.

More on Vladivostok Protest Rally

944F0478E Vladivostok VLADIVOSTOK in Russian 22 March 94 p 1

[Report by VLADIVOSTOK correspondent Yegor Trubnikov: "Zhirinovskiy Did Not Come, But Rally Was Held"]

[Text] A rally was held on Sunday at Vladivostok's central square under the traditional banner "In Defense of Human Rights," with (by approximate count) about 1,000 persons participating.

The information that in connection with certain political events Vladimir Volfovich himself was planning to be in Vladivostok and take part in the rally came early Sunday morning from the Russian radio, which could not fail to increase city residents' interest in the planned event. It would be unfair to say, however, that people came ONLY to see Zhirinovskiy—those who gathered here were sincere, convinced supporters of Viktor Cherepkov and the former masters of the Vladivostok mayoralty.

The absence of the promised LDPR [Liberal Democratic Party of Russia] leader at the rally did not disappoint those present: The famous extravagant and original thinking of the latter was more than compensated for by the speakers, whose expressions far from always could be defined as parliamentary language. Which in turn may prompt another series of court hearings on cases "in defense of honor and dignity" of a number of high-ranking persons in the kray administration. After two hours of debates, a resolution was adopted, expressing the resolve to continue fighting for human rights in Vladivostok.

The rally ended without incidents.

Novocherkassk Cossacks Urge Expulsion of Foreigners

PM2503103994 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 25 Mar 94 p 1

[ITAR-TASS report: "Don Cossacks Concerned"]

[Text] "The time has now come for the descendants of the famous Cossacks to make their contribution to protecting the fatherland. Let us defend it from desecration and disparagement, from crime, greed, and the excessive license of groupings and individuals who are demeaning our sacred Don land," states an appeal from the "Cossack team" of city Duma deputies to the inhabitants of the city of Novocherkassk.

The appeal stresses that, with the connivance of the city leadership and administrative organs, mass registration of foreign citizens is underway, land, industrial and other premises, and real estate are being bought up, and "leaders of the 'black' economy, traders, and criminals are infiltrating the area and settling permanently."

The group of Cossack candidate deputies, considering the residence of foreign citizens on oblast and city territory to be illegal, is calling for their expulsion.

Yeltsin Envoy Mediates Nizhniy Reformers' 'Split'

PM2503130594 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 25 Mar 94 p 1

[Valeriy Orlov report under the "Conflict" rubric: "Maritime Syndrome in Nizhniy Novgorod"]

[Text] Nizhniy Novgorod—Conflicts are currently in vogue. The slanging match between the two administrations in Vladivostok has not yet died down, and now here is another one—between Nizhniy Novgorod Governor Boris Nemtsov and city administration head Dmitriy Bednyakov. To try to extinguish the smoldering flame before it takes hold was the aim of a one-day visit to the Volga city by Petr Filippov, chief of the Presidential Administration Administration for Information Support.

"I have come to study the situation on the ground on the eve of the elections," he told ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA's correspondent. "You see, the Presidential Administration is concerned that in a number of oblasts and regions elections have been unsuccessful. Nor are we unaware of the preelection conflict between Nizhniy Novgorod Governor Boris Nemtsov and Mayor Dmitriy Bednyakov..."

In order to get to the bottom of the situation, Petr Filippov visited the city administration, talked with the governor, met local entrepreneurs, exchanged opinions with citizens, and spoke with journalists. I inquired as to his impressions. They are on the whole positive. Concerning the elections for the oblast legislative assembly, the city duma, and the mayor of Nizhniy Novgorod due on 27 March Petr Filippov expressed himself optimistically. In his opinion they will be successful, and he foresees a fairly high percentage turnout.

[Orlov] "Why?"

[Filippov] "Conflicts always attract attention and intrigue people...."

What is the essence of the preelection clashes in Nizhniy Novgorod? Initially they centered around the privatization of the motor car plant. ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI has written about this several times. Then the adoption of the Nizhniy Novgorod charter became the bone of contention. Dmitriy Bednyakov, the current acting mayor, decreed that a referendum should be held 27 March on the local self-government charter. But Governor Boris Nemtsov, relying on the law and an interpretation from the Russian Federation president's state-legal administration, deemed the city mayor's actions a contravention of legislation and revoked his referendum decree. Bednyakov, in turn, does not agree with Nemtsov's conclusions. And so on and so forth.

P. Filippov did not give his assessment at the press conference of the preelection squabbles in the upper echelons of power in Nizhniy Novgorod. This circumspection can only be welcomed. The situation will be reported to the president personally, he said. At the same time the visitor from Moscow expressed regret over the marked split in the ranks of local reformers.

St. Petersburg Constituencies To Hold Elections Again

LD2303212194 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1935 GMT 23 Mar 94

[Text] According to preliminary reports, the elections to the St. Petersburg Assembly have been recognized as valid in 25 out of 50 St. Petersburg constituencies. All of these constituencies will hold a second round of the elections, since none of the candidates canvassed the required number of votes.

Among 50 candidates, there are 20 representatives of the bloc St. Petersburg Democratic Unity, which support Russia's Choice. The bloc is headed by the former chairman of Petrosoviet, deputy of the Federation Council, Aleksandr Belyayev.

St. Petersburg Democratic Unity is followed by another bloc called All St. Petersburg which claims to encompass the city's bankers, businessmen and intellectuals and is headed by a deputy chairman of Goskomimuschestvo (committee for managing state property), Sergey Belyayev. The third place is occupied by a centrist bloc, The City We Love, headed by Vice Mayor Vyacheslav Scherbakov.

The bloc Business St. Petersburg formed by directors of state-owned enterprises nominated the former head of the Baltic steamship line who is now accused of forgery and embezzlement of state property and remains under investigation.

None of the candidates nominated by Communist, nationalist, patriotic and liberal democratic parties managed to enter the second round of the elections.

After another nomination of candidates, the other 25 constituencies will hold the first round of the elections once again. On March 20-21, the proportion of those who voted in the city reached a mere 25.6 percent. Some experts and observers are skeptical about the procedure for the vote count, since St. Petersburg Mayor Anatoliy Sobchak lifted the restriction barring soldiers and students from voting on the election day in accordance with a court decision. Therefore, these categories of electors were not included in the main election lists beforehand. Instead, they were introduced into additional lists as they showed up at the ballot stations. If they had been included in the main lists beforehand, the percentage of voters could have been even lower and would never have reached the 25-percent mark required to make the elections valid.

St. Petersburg Forecasts R1.5 Trillion Deficit

MK2403125094 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 24 Mar 94 p 3

[Aleksandr Ivanov report from St. Petersburg under the "Money" rubric: "St. Petersburg's Budget Approved Without City Assembly. City Treasury's Expenditures To Exceed Revenues for the First Time"]

[Text] The St. Petersburg government has hastily approved the city's budget for 1994. It is planned that the city budget's annual revenues will be 2,116,772,000,000 rubles [R] and expenditures will amount to R3,607,993,000,000 in 1 February 1994 prices. Hence, city hall has envisioned for 1994 a budget deficit of nearly R1.5 trillion.

It is expected that social spending will account for 40 percent of budget expenditures, nearly the same share as the maintenance of the municipal infrastructure. The maintenance of government authorities will require 1.5 percent of the entire budget expenditures. Another 14 percent of St. Petersburg's budget appropriations will be channeled to finance investment projects. The share of expenditures on the municipal infrastructure will rise 1.5 percent, that of social and cultural spending will be up 0.5 percent. According to city hall, the maintenance of government authorities will be less costly for the city's taxpayers—specialists from the financial committee managed to reduce the share of expenditures on the maintenance of bureaucrats by 0.1 percent.

According to assessments by city hall's financial committee specialists, implementing the budget approved by the city government will be a hard task. By comparison with other Russian Federation components, St. Petersburg's overly cumbersome economy, prone to inertia, is impeding the city's transfer to new principles of budget formation, but city hall expects to cope with the problem.

International Affairs

Warhead Return to Russia May be Rescheduled

LD2403202494 Moscow NTV in Russian 1900 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] Ukrainian Foreign Affairs Minister Anatoliy Zlenko today said the timetable for withdrawing nuclear warheads from Ukraine to Russia could be reviewed. Ukraine is accusing Russia of delaying the delivery of nuclear fuel for Ukrainian nuclear power stations.

Further Zlenko Comment

LD2503093794 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0331 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] The Ukrainian Foreign Minister Anatoliy Zlenko told journalists on his return from a trip to Warsaw and Brussels that he shares the opinion of the Ukrainian defense minister about the possible adjustment of the timetable for the withdrawal of warheads from Ukraine. In response to a question by the Interfax-Ukraine news agency, Zlenko said that "all signatories of the statement on nuclear disarmament of Ukraine should fulfil their obligations."

Earlier this week Ukrainian leaders stated that Ukraine may suspend the withdrawal of warheads unless Russia starts transportation of nuclear fuel for Ukrainian nuclear power stations.

"We are entitled to issue a statement and take corresponding measures in order to fulfil obligations assumed under the trilateral statement," Zlenko said. Asked about the U.S. role in the fulfillment of obligations under the statement, Zlenko said: "We are talking about equal partnership. Each side should assume equal obligations."

Hot Line To Be Installed with U.S. Defense

LD2303180094 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 0400 GMT 23 Mar 94

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] On Tuesday the U.S. and Ukrainian defense ministers held a joint news conference in Kiev. During it, William Perry clarified the situation regarding the debt owed to Russia. As a result of US failure to pay 60 million dollars due under the tripartite agreement, Russia has not been supplying the Ukraine with fuel for its nuclear power stations. Perry said this problem would be resolved within 10 days of his return home.

The announcement by Defense Minister Vitaliy Radetskyy that a direct communications link would be installed between the Ukrainian Defense Ministry and the U.S. Defense Department created a sensation. A 17-point working program for cooperation has been drafted. The Ukrainian defense minister said the U.S. side had shown a commitment to a just solution of the problem of the Crimean Peninsula and the Black Sea Fleet.

Partnership Deal Initialed with European Union

LD2303185994 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1748 GMT 23 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Aleksandr Mineyev]

[Text] Brussels March 23 TASS—Ukraine initialed the agreement of Partnership and Cooperation with the European Union [EU] on Wednesday.

The document was signed by Ukrainian Foreign Minister Anatoliy Zlenko and European Commission member Leon Britten. The date of the high-level signing of the agreement has yet to be determined, but Britten and Zlenko said that it will happen soon. Britten said that work is currently underway to prepare similar documents with other CIS countries, including Russia.

The work on the agreement with Ukraine had taken almost a year. It allows Ukraine to eventually join the European Free Trade Zone. In 1998 the sides will sum up the results of market reforms in Ukraine and decide whether or not they should begin talks on its participation in the Free Trade Zone. So far Ukraine and the European Union have agreed to grant trade preferences to each other, lift the existing quotas and agree on terms of trade in coal, steel and radioactive materials. Ukraine have also pledged to create favourable conditions for Western companies.

Both sides stressed the importance of boosting and strengthening regional cooperation within the former Soviet Union. The preamble of the agreement confirms the EU support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The EU Commission will also issue 1.3 million ECU [European currency unit] (1.5 million U.S. dollars) to Ukraine in humanitarian aid for the victims of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant disaster.

Zlenko Comments

LD2303195694 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1725 GMT 23 Mar 94

[Text] In Brussels Ukraine and the Commission of the European Union have initialled a treaty of friendship and cooperation. At a news conference after the ceremony the Ukrainian Foreign Minister Anatoliy Zlenko called it the fist step to carry out the Rome agreement on the possible admission of new countries to the European community.

In his opinion, in the near future the agreement will "guarantee Ukraine political support and economic assistance in its efforts to expand democracy and reform the economy on free market principles."

Ukraine was the first CIS country to initial such a treaty. Earlier the three Baltic states became associated members of the European Union. Under the initialled document the two sides are to carry out a set of measures to integrate Ukraine in the community. Talks should begin in 1998 on Ukraine's membership in a free trade zone. In the near future agreements will be worked out on Ukrainian metal and coal exports to EU countries.

Crimea, Tatarstan Sign Cooperation Communique

LD1903103294 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1007 GMT 19 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Nikolay Sorokin]

[Text] Kazan March 19 TASS—Friendship and cooperation for long time to come is the essence of a communique signed by delegations from the Crimea and Tataria [Tatarstan] after their meetings in Kazan today. This document is the second step in the development of relations between the two republics.

President of Tatarstan Mintimer Shaymiyev signed an agreement on trade and economic cooperation during his visit to the Crimea last summer. Tataria had made commitments to supply oil, oil products, petrochemicals, and in exchange, the Crimea—to provide wines, fruits and vegetables, and accommodation in its sanatoriums.

During the Kazan meetings issues concerning the fulfilment of the 1993 agreement were discussed, and possibilities of the further development of economic, scientific and technical, cultural and humanitarian cooperation between state, public, national and scientific establishments were spelled out, the communique stated. According to the document, bilateral relations will be built on principles of equal rights, respect for human rights and partnership. It is planned to set up trade and economic and cultural centres in Kazan and Simferopol.

The political significance of the treaty and a package of inter- governmental agreements between the Russian Federation and Tataria was noted at the meetings. The two sides emphasised that all disputed and knotty issues of state construction must be resolved through negotiations.

The visit to Tataria by a Crimean delegation headed by President Yuriy Meshkov is going on. The Crimeans are familiarizing themselves with the capital of Tataria and its outskirts.

Kiev Oblast, Chinese Province Sign Accord

AU2303202094 Kiev HOLOS UKRAYINY in Ukrainian 22 Mar 94 p 6

[Unattributed report: "Ukraine—China: the First Agreement Signed Between Regions"]

[Text] An oblast state administration delegation headed by presidential representative in Kiev Oblast Ivan Kapshtyk returned home from the Chinese Hopeh Province. In view of the great significance of establishing and expanding mutually advantageous economic, scientific-technological, and cultural partnership between Kiev Oblast and the Hopeh Province, an agreement on friendship and cooperation between them was signed.

"Together with deputy head of the government of the province Han Nanpen [name as transliterated], we have made a constructive step toward cooperation at the level of regions," said I. Kapshtyk. "Both we and they are very interested in investing in joint enterprises that are being created, in other forms of entrepreneurship, in the light and foodstuffs industry, in the sphere of powder metallurgy, and trade.

NSAU, NASA To Cooperate in Space Research

LD2303212494 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1935 GMT 23 Mar 94

[Text] The negotiations between the National Space Agency of Ukraine (NSAU) and an official delegation of the U.S. space agency (NASA) ended in Kiev Wednesday producing a joint declaration.

According to the document, the two sides will look into the possibilities for cooperation in space research, physics of circumterrestrial space, the mutual impact between the sun and the earth, space-based scanning of the earth, space biology and aeronautics. In part, the declaration proposed using the Ukrainian scientific vessels Yuriy Gagarin and Academician Korolev.

According to NSAU Director General Vladimir Gorbulin, the vessels were used to maintain space communications in times when the former Soviet Union still existed. "Nowadays they are out of service and are a heavy burden for the Ukrainian Defense Ministry," he pointed out.

Gorbulin said the talks failed to touch on the possibility of bilateral cooperation in producing spacecraft and using space transportation systems which is of great importance for Ukraine. In his opinion, that was caused by Ukraine's failure in 1992 to back the U.S. proposal to expose its missile technologies to international control. At the moment, as many as 26 countries have signed the agreement.

National Affairs

Meshkov Instruction on Crimea Military Service

LD2403184194 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1700 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] Crimean President Yuriy Meshkov has signed an instruction according to which the citizens of the Republic will perform their military service only on the territory of the peninsula. At the same time, Aleksandr

Volkov, the military commandant of Crimea, said in an interview to INTERFAX that this document has been adopted without his approval and he intends to meet the president in the near future in order to discuss this issue. The matter is that the Military Commissariat of Crimea comes under the command of the Ukrainian Defense Ministry. In this connection, Aleksandr Volkov said that he is not going to fulfill this instruction and will act in accordance with orders from the Ukrainian president. He added that the Spring conscription in Crimea will be held in accordance with orders that were established earlier.

Crimean Army Chief Disagrees With Meshkov

LD2403174494 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1459 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] Crimean President Yuriy Meshkov signed a decree Wednesday night [23 March], according to which Army service in the Crimea will be confined to this peninsula.

By the document, the Crimean Army Commander Aleksandr Volkov is instructed to carry out the drafting this spring of young men born in 1976. He has reportedly been trying to get in touch with Meshkov to discuss the matter.

"I do not obey the Crimean President Meshkov and will comply with instructions from the Ukrainian president," he stressed and added that the spring draft would tally with earlier planned targets.

Meshkov Orders Crimea Switch to Moscow Time 27 Mar

LD2403193094 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1855 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Report by UKRINFORM correspondent Lev Ryabchikov for TASS]

[Text] Simferopol 24 March, TASS—Crimean President Yuriy Meshkov signed a decree on Thursday ordering the Republic to switch to Moscow time beginning 27 March.

The decision will also affect all railway, water, air and inter-city automobile transportation and communication services. Enterprises and organisation will switch to the new regime on Monday, 28 March.

Meshkov: Referendum Will Not Worsen Ukraine Relations

LD2303173994 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1419 GMT 23 Mar 94

[Text] The results of the Crimean referendum will not affect relations with Ukraine, said Crimean President Yuriy Meshkov. On the contrary, he said Tuesday [22 March] in an interview with foreign journalists in Simferopol, this will help transfer relations into a definite channel.

Meshkov said that due to irrational economic policies of Kiev's leadership our Crimean home is razed to the ground. Our task is to build it up and we ask Ukraine not to interfere, he said. Meshkov intends to build the Crimean "home" by restoring normal economic relations with Russia and establishing mutually advantageous relations with Ukraine and other CIS and foreign countries.

Dual citizenship, said Meshkov, is the bleeding wound that causes most people in the Crimea to suffer. He believes the problem is caused by the abnormal conditions of the Soviet Union's disintegration, the disruption of traditional ties and largely bears a moral-political rather than legal character.

The Crimean Republic having its own citizenship, with people also being allowed to hold a second Ukraine or Russian citizenship will lessen the suffering of Crimeans, believes Meshkov. The problem of citizenship, he said, is also the problem of statehood. That is why it should be solved immediately.

I do not have negative feelings for the President of Ukraine (Leonid Kravchuk—"IF"), said Meshkov. I believe he does not feel negatively about me. It is a matter of the incompatibility of nationalist sentiments within the Ukrainian leadership and the Crimean's aspirations as a consequence of the collapse of the economy, said Meshkov.

Kravchuk: Independence Lost Without Armed Forces

LD2403152994 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1225 GMT 24 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Galina Nekrasova]

[Text] Lvov 24 March, TASS—If Ukraine does not have its own army, it will have no independence either, Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk said. He spoke at a news conference after the end of a military training session at the Yavor training ground of the Carpathian military district, in which the Air Force, artillery pieces and tanks took part. Along with the commander-in-chief of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, military attaches of a number of foreign counties watched the shooting practice.

"The expenditures of 40 billion karbovanets, as calculated by some journalists, on the military exercise in these difficult days are still necessary," Kravchuk said. "If we want today to have 150 grammes of pork on our tables instead of 100 grammes, tomorrow we shall have no army and, consequently, no independence."

Problems raised at the news conference included the stock-taking at the Black Sea Fleet, the creation of a

special bilateral commission and the conversion of nuclear armaments in Ukraine.

The president expressed satisfaction over the decision of the Central Electoral Commission of the Crimea to hold a social opinion poll instead of a referendum, as planned by Yuriy Meshkov. "The opinion poll will have no consequences, but will cost a lot of money," Kravchuk pointed out. Touching upon the forthcoming presidential elections in Ukraine, Kravchuk stressed again that he was not going to run for presidency and explained it by the absence of a new constitution, laws on the structure of the state management system and the status of the president, which the outgoing parliament failed to adopt. The Ukrainian president hopes that the elections will take place on 27 March, otherwise Ukraine will be swept by chaos.

Kravchuk, Others Attend Opening of Bank Note Factory

LD2303201794 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 1610 GMT 23 Mar 94

[Text] [Announcer] A trial specimen of Ukraine's first monetary unit—the hryvna—has been printed in Kiev. This was done during the presentation of a bank note factory. Ukraine's President Leonid Kravchuk, Acting Prime Minister Yukhym Zvyahilskyy, and Viktor Yushchenko, the chairman of the National Bank of Ukraine, took part in the opening ceremony. Our correspondent Ihor Kulinichenko reports on this event.

[Kulinichenko] Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk pushed the button and the unit started functioning. And here is the first product, symbolic product, so to say, coming out [word indistinct]—Ukraine' first monetary unit.

[Announcer] During his conversation with journalists Leonid Kravchuk emphasized the expediency of issuing [Ukraine's] own national monetary unit.

[Begin Kravchuk recording] The state that has its own money, its own currency, is an independent and sovereign state. This is why any talk to the effect that we will be independent while we have some other currency in our state is a mere deception of the people. You do not need to go far, here is the National Bank chairman, ask him: Can a state be independent when it has some other currency? [passage indistinct]

Where is Yukhym Leonidovych Zvyahilskyy? I am here with the journalists, and when I say that the country's own currency is the attribute of statehood, they tell me that I am a nationalist. Maybe, this is because I am from a different region. I have already replied to other people, including the residents of Moscow. Because, if other another currency [circulates in Ukraine], our bank and Viktor Andriyovych will become a subsidiary. And the Russian Central Bank is, by the way, setting such a condition. And this is normal. One should not blame the Russian bank. This is a normal condition. If you agree to use the ruble you have to become a subsidiary.

And then the deputies, elected by the people, will assemble at the Supreme Council and they will have to make decisions on [Ukraine's] own money, on credit policy, on taxes. And they will be told that this does not [word indistinct] with the interests of the Russian National Bank. This is normal.

This is why, under these conditions, the people will be allowed to elect deputies, but the deputies will not be able to make any [word indistinct].

This is why we all here—myself, the prime minister, the National Bank chairman, and all those present, came here so as to emphasize that this is an attribute of our independence. And any talk to the effect that there can be something else is pretense and a deception of the people. I would not like to arrest, as they say, attention on this very aspect, but money, the financial and banking systems are the [word indistinct] of such a sign. When reforms [words indistinct] we are setting up Ukraine's own banking system. [end recording]

[Announcer] Ihor Kulinichenko told you about the commissioning of the state bank note factory whose presentation was attended by the president of Ukraine and other high-ranking government officials and statesmen.

Acting Prime Minister Interviewed on Economy

PM2403134594 Moscow TRUD in Russian 24 Mar 94 p 2

[Interview with Ukrainian Acting Prime Minister Yukhym Zvyahilskyy by Stanislav Prokopchuk in Kiev; date not given: "Yukhym Zvyahilskyy: "You Won't Get Ukraine To Fall Out with Russia"]

[Text] Some Western media are blowing up the "conflict" between Ukraine and Russia. Britain's THE SUNDAY TIMES, for example, forecasts not only Ukraine's economic collapse, but a war between it and Russia. "If the crisis continues," the newspaper writes, "the majority of the Russians in Ukraine will choose the path of unification with Russia. This will provoke a civil war." TRUD's correspondent asked Ukrainian Acting Prime Minister Yukhym Leonidovich Zvyahilskyy to comment on this and other similar forecasts.

[Zvyahilskyy] These are the ravings of a madman. Clearly, some people would very much like our relations to develop according to that kind of scenario, but no one is going to get us to fall out. Close, equitable ties with Russia were and remain our main policy priority. Russia is our biggest economic partner. We have historical, cultural, and linguistic connections. There are 12 million Russians living in our country.

Ukraine is a major partner of Russia's. The Ukrainian market is equal to one-third of the Russian market. Major lines of communication to Europe and the Black

Sea area run through our country. The economies of the Russian oblasts bordering us are the most stable because they maintain direct economic links with Ukrainian enterprises, and, you know, tens of millions of people live in those oblasts.

In short, a strong and stable Ukraine is in the interests of Russia and its people. We should always live in peace and friendship. But there is no point in adhering to the principle that one's own interests are what count and everyone else's must fit in with "big brother's." I am sure that's how it will be when politics stop dominating economics and commonsense. It can be said that we are already en route to that today. We are boldly developing bilateral relations and are setting up joint ventures. We should eliminate more quickly the problem of nonpayments and obtain the opportunity to pay in a normal way for the raw materials and commodities of both Russian and our own enterprises. Nonpayments is a common ill, and we have to cure it together, and not by relying on some benefactor to endlessly provide nonrepayable loans.

[Prokopchuk] You are thinking of supplies of Russian gas?

[Zvyahilskyy] I cannot fault Russia at all here. We ourselves are to blame for the temporary halt in gas supplies. Russia provides us with 140 million cubic meters of gas a day. But there were several days when we were taking 180 million a day, thereby reducing the pressure in the export gas pipelines. Who is going to put up with that kind of presumptuousness. That is why my deputy, V. Landik, flew to Moscow and guaranteed Gazprom that we would not allow such outrageous behavior in future.

[Prokopchuk] Is it true that the Russian joint-stock company Gazprom is demanding that the main gas pipelines and the underground gas reservoirs be transferred to it to make up the arrears?

[Zvyahilskyy] That is idle speculation. Different terms were proposed: Namely, that a controlling block of shares be given to Gazprom during the flotation of the Ukrainian gas transportation enterprises and gas refineries. But we will not accept that. We propose something else—flotation with the participation of Russian capital. But Ukraine will retain the controlling block of shares here. We are now preparing documents on yet another issue on which it is time we reached agreement. This involves the so-called "zero option" division of the former USSR's debts and property. Russia has repeatedly asked us to agree this option, saying that no one is to owe anyone anything, while the huge amount of former Soviet property belongs in its entirety to Russia. We insist that Ukraine has its own share of this foreign property. We have agreed to pay the appropriate proportion of the former debts to it. We are preparing a letter to the Russian Government.

[Prokopchuk] Property is a good thing. But you will agree that you will have to wait a long time for it to yield a profit, while the situation in the country is already explosive. Half the population lives below the poverty line and millions are unable to buy the necessities of life. Are there any hopes today of a better outcome, of stabilization?

[Zvyahilskyy] Our predecessors pinned their hopes on foreign loans. No one gave us any, and we can see that they are not a panacea. Hopes pinned on the possibility of rapid integration within the European economy and help from Ukrainians abroad were likewise dashed. Our government, headed by the president, relies solely on its own devices and possibilities. Unfortunately, serious mistakes in both the strategy and tactics of reform have been made in the last two years. As a result last year alone prices increased 100-fold while wages went up 50-fold. In what kind of normal state could you increase the return on fuel oil to 5,000 percent while raising the payment of bank loans to 320-percent interest per annum?

This is not an expose of things done in the past, they represent inescapable facts of the present day.

[Prokopchuk] The cabinet headed by the president has been in office five months. Has it managed to achieve anything?

[Zvyahilskiy] Although the economic position in the country is difficult, the first signs of stabilization have nevertheless already emerged. The inflation rate did not exceed 20 percent in January-February, which is 4.5-times less than last December. Prices for the most important foodstuffs are not going up. Prices for sugar, butter, and vodka are actually going down. The rate of exchange of the karbovanets against the Russian ruble and the U.S. dolar has stabilized. It has not changed since January.

I understand the sowing campaign is proceeding normally. We have settled our debts with the countryside and the numerous enterprises which sent their products to CIS countries last year under a clearing agreement. We are abandoning that this year. Accounts will be kept only in rubles or freely convertible currency. Prices for the next crop of wheat, sugarbeet, and sunflower have been fixed, as have prices for petroleum products, fertilizers, and plant protection agents. We will be granting credits for the sowing and harvesting campaigns solely in the form of goods, not money, because monetary credits, regardless of control, have vanished God knows where via the commercial banks.

[Prokopchuk] Credits were surreptitiously converted into dollars and landed in foreign banks. Will you be able to get the money repatriated?

[Zvyahilskyy] Only credits worth 8.6 trillion karbovantsi have been returned. Some $30 million for products sold last year under state contracts have not been. That is without taking account of what disappeared via commercial structures. Henceforth, we are introducing flexible currency regulation; we want to achieve through this a

real correlation of prices for basic kinds of foodstuffs here and among our main business partners. We intend to determine precisely in terms of kinds of produce that proportion of the currency which must be sold to the state without fail. A plan to improve tax legislation hass been outlined; it will be geared toward the interest of manufacturers rather than traders.

All these measures should resolve the chief problem—that of ensuring the prompt repatriation of hard-currency export earnings. A number of decisions were made recently to that end. Under those decisions, all currency will pass solely through one state bank. Top managers are trying to torpedo this decision, but we are standing firm—no licences or quotas will be issued unless accounts are opened in the Ukreksimbank and agreement is obtained for all export-import transactions to be serviced by that bank. That will enable us to establish control over currency transactions and introduce a system of liability for the repayment of credits. I think that if we instil order in this sphere we will have the wherewithal to pay for fuel supplies from Russia.

I should talk, in particular, about our debts for gas. The government has instructed the main gas consumers—the Ministry of Industry with its chemical and metallurgical concerns, and the Ministry of Machine Building Industry—to pay for it in rubles or freely convertible currency, only on a prepayment basis. This arrangement will also be introduced for other consumers. The state will pay only for gas intended for municipal and domestic needs.

Today we are caused many problems by the fact that karbovantsi, rubles, and dollars circulate in parallel within the country. We think that the state should have only one national currency—the karbovanets. This will above all raise its exchange rate to a normal level and block off ways of deliberately padding the dollar exchange rate. If we want to block off the channel for currency speculation only the National Bank and its branches should, in my opinion, buy and sell currency.

[Prokopchuk] You have set your sights on what is the most profitable business for commercial structures....

[Zvyahilskyy] I am under strong pressure for that reason. Sometimes government decisions are blocked. We issue someone currency, and it takes 15-20 days to reach the recipient. It is daylight robbery. We are trying to do something, but there is so much to do. I can see that it is time to put a stop to the anarchy and total licence for which Ukraine was "famous" in 1992-93.

[Prokopchuk] But the enormous apparatus of the cabinet comes under you.

[Zvyahilskyy] I do not know what will happen after the election of the new parliament, but I am sure that the cabinet needs to be restructured. It is clear that there will be structural and cadre changes in it. I have been able to see during my five months that the apparatus is not overburdened with people willing to give their all in the defense of state interests. A program has been adopted to make considerable cuts in the strength of the administrative-managerial apparatus at both central and local level. Incidentally, the first stage in the cutting of the Army's strength by 92,000 will also start this year.

In short, I am sure that these and other measures—privatization and the restructuring of our energy-intensive industry—will clear up the lamentable consequences of the "Ukrainianization of the economy" of past years. As far as the forecasts of Ukraine's "collapse" are concerned, they will not materialize. Our country has huge potential reserves. And we, I am sure, like our friendly neighbor, Russia, will be able to tap them for the good of our people.

Government Authorizes Barter Deals for Russian Gas, Oil

WS2503124494 Kiev Ukrayinske Radio First Program Network in Ukrainian 0600 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] To repay the debts of Ukrainian enterprises for energy resources, and in connection with the lack of currency resources, the Council of Ministers has authorized the State Committee for Oil and Gas to strike barter [word indistinct] deals with the Russian stock holding association GAZPROM, state enterprise ROSNAFTA, oil and gas extracting associations, and other enterprises that export natural gas and oil to Ukraine, to deliver goods from Ukrainian enterprises for (?gas and oil) debts. The list of these goods has been formulated by the government's resolution. In particular, these goods include vehicles, various machine-tools, equipment, agricultural vehicles, means of communication, consumer goods, food stuffs, etc. The State Customs Committee is authorized to ensure the working out of customs formalities for exporting the goods in exchange for natural gas and oil without preliminary payments and taking customs duties for these operations.

Communist Leader States Party Position

944K0944A Simferopol KRYMSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 23 Mar 94 p 2

[Interview with Leonid Grach, first secretary of the Republic committee of the Communist Party of Crimea, by S. Anenkova; place and date not given: "The Lessons of History Are Always Costly"]

[Text] [Anenkova] Leonid Ivanovich, you have been nominated candidate for deputy of the Supreme Council from the Communist Party of Crimea, which you head. The attitude toward the Communists among the electorate is, as far as we know, ambiguous: from unreserved solidarity to categorical rejection. Would it not have been safer, knowing the situation, to have run as an independent candidate?

[Grach] What have I to hide? Yes, I am one of the few politicians who in the period since the putsch has not changed colors and who has not betrayed his ideals, for

which I have endured incredible moral terror unleashed in the news media. Many of my former party associates were afraid even to visit me in the hospital, for fear of sullying their new, "democratic," reputation. More important to me, though, than any portfolios (I could have had as many as I wanted) is my reputation as a person. It was for this reason necessary to negotiate all the anathemas. Life, as the song goes, does not end tomorrow: It will sort everything out itself. The people very quickly sensed for themselves what life was like under the Communists and the sort of troubles they are swallowing under the so-called democrats. On the one hand it is unique, on the other, entirely natural, that at the time of the presidential elections the Communist Party underwent a kind of registration among the people and was reborn, considering all the objective and subjective realities and fabricated stereotypes of its dismal perception—this was a very good result. For this reason, today's recognition by thousands upon thousands of nonparty people is for me extraordinarily valuable and important. When people say that this is not a great number of votes, they sin against objectivity: It is sufficient to recall how the entire machinery of state—from the Supreme Soviet, Council of Ministers, and chairmen of the city and rayon soviets through enterprise managers—together with many political forces were literally bent on destroying me. No candidate was subjected to such pressure as Grach. The party absorbed the first assault in my person and after that test acquired, it should be noted, moral fortitude and stood up straight on its own two feet.

Let us not deceive ourselves and admit honestly that the sole actual party that we have today is the Communist Party. It alone has a scientifically substantiated program of the building of a socially just society, experience of state administration, and a reserve of skilled managerial personnel, another school for the training of those we simply do not have.

And, most importantly, our party slate includes authoritative, decent, highly professional people. Among these are Yu.I. Bogatikov, people's artist of the USSR; A.M. Kalinin, admiral and former commander of the Black Sea Fleet; A.M. Rasnitsov, hero of the Soviet Union; and many other representatives of various professions, cities and rayons, and nationalities.

[Anenkova] What do you see as the solutions to the impasse, and why, in your opinion, have we for so long been wandering around in the dark?

[Grach] First let us look at the state of prostration in which we have found ourselves. We have taken the past away from ourselves. We have not created a present. And we are not in a position to imagine the future, even in the form of a vision. Reform presupposes a change in the system of life and activity with the simultaneous reproduction of the actual framework-principle of this life.

We are today instead experiencing a typical pseudomorphosis, that is, a chimera. One of its most important signs is the "mystery" of the rules of the so-called "reform," more precisely, redistribution, of property, which is being undertaken on the sly, under the table. The mechanism of this operation is not being made public deliberately in order that it might be possible to concentrate all the benefits in the hands of the "reformers." According to the laws of the civilized world, if it does, indeed, resolve to divide itself into two classes—rich and healthy on the one hand and poor and sick on the other—three basic conditions are observed. First, national principles of the implementation of the reform—the "rules of the game" by which the new society shall be built—are announced; second, the equality of the "initial" rights of all categories of society in this "game," precluding any advantages, is recognized; and, third, labor efforts and sharpness of intellect ensuring competition are deemed to be the basis for stratification.

In our situation, however, the powers that be are beyond competition: They want to get into both capitalism and paradise by pulling strings. Even the socialism-capitalism concepts, which are counterposed to one another like unambiguous antipodes, have not been conceptualized.

Is there a way out of the gapping chasm? I am profoundly convinced—such that in my conviction I am like a fanatic, a zealous believer—that until we find a solution to the socioeconomic impasse, there is no nor will there be any way out. Paradise will never be built in Crimea by itself, inasmuch as there are laws of systemic order and interdependence which exist regardless of the wishes of politicians. I am sure that it will not be even six months before everyone is saying the same things as myself and that the restoration of a unified state based on common borders, customs, financial system, and monetary units will ultimately be the inevitable reality. A special historical role has been prepared for Crimea, however, in the unification process—the motivating factor of integration in an economic union with Russia, Ukraine, Belorusia [Belarus], and other republics. Such, in brief, are the strategic tasks.

[Anenkova] Is it possible to mitigate the fate of the "poor and sick," as you put it, in emergency fashion? After all, while politicians are seeking their formulas, needy Crimeans are literally dying.

[Grach] Stabilization of Crimeans' living standard within the framework of today's possibilities is the Communists' paramount task. We intend to seek to ensure that the Supreme Council pass a law on the creation of a state system of social protection of the populace in accordance with the principle of the controlled conformity of wages, pensions, and grants to the actual subsistence minimum. We will demand of the executive the implementation of specific measures aimed at combating unemployment and creating new jobs, introducing government subsidies fixing the price of bread and milk, and ensuring free health care and

education, higher included, and the accessibility of children's establishments to each family and other social safeguards, which must be observed as the holy of holies. We feel particularly for the children, who have been deprived of the legitimate right of harmonious development: They have been thrown out onto the street and into basements and have been forced to criminally acquire the wherewithal to live. We are duty-bound to defend our women. We are in irredeemable debt to our old people, who as gratitude for lives given to the state, have been condemned to stand cap in hand at the church porch.

[Anenkova] On what basis do you plan the restoration of Crimea's economy?

[Grach] The economic basis should, in our opinion, be a multistructured economy with the retention of the leading role of public property and state regulation. It is state regulation that should ensure the extrication of the national economy from the severe economic crisis, and the multistructured economy is the way of achieving the social harmony that we so much need on the basis of a concurrence of interests of the broadest strata of society: from the worker and employee through the entrepreneur. For the purpose of stimulation of the producer of any form of property (private included), we will seek a fundamental change in financial policy in the direction of privileged taxation and lending with a simultaneous expansion of the tax and investment field, the establishment of government subsidies for agriculture, and the removal of the "price cutters" in respect to agricultural and industrial products and will contribute in every possible way to the development of both the kolkhozes and sovkhozes and tenant and private farms.

[Anenkova] What is your attitude toward property?

[Grach] Only those who are filling their pockets with dishonest money may fear the program of the Communists: We will conduct a relentless struggle against crime, corruption, and profiteering, creating all the conditions for the producer-proprietor to thrive. The sole area where private property is unacceptable is land, the basic wealth of Crimea, which must belong to all the people. Land may be leased, indefinitely included, and may be inherited, but may not be bought and sold. Otherwise, we would face the threat of becoming on our native peninsula not only "emigres" but also colonized slaves. There are already such trends on the territory of the former Union.

[Anenkova] What kind of system of state administration would seem optimal to you?

[Grach] We are for a broadening of the sovereignty of the soviets of all levels—as a guarantor of the strengthening of the state status of Crimea, excluding the possibility of the establishment of an authoritarian dictatorship. The optimum path of the solution of strategic questions of the republic's socioeconomic development could be, in our view, consultation with the people via referendum. And we are prepared upon entering the Supreme Council to offer the people, together with the government, a program, if national salvation is what you want.

[Anenkova] Leonid Ivanovich, have there been in your life events, meetings, and achievements that have made a particular mark on your memory?

[Grach] There have been a multitude of memorable meetings, of course: As a party official, I preferred to work among people and help them resolve their problems—people were always coming to my office, and not in vain, probably, confident that they would get a sympathetic reception. But there is in the sequence of events an achievement of which I am particularly proud: the referendum that revived in 1991 from Crimea Oblast the Republic of Crimea.

Remember the Varfamaleyevka reprisal against the Meskhetian Turks and the tent compounds of the Crimean Tatars (refugees) pitched in Crimea? We formed a peacemaking delegation at that time and set off for the scene of the events in Uzbekistan. The tragedy that we saw there was impossible to contemplate with an easy heart: ashes in the place of yesterday's dwellings, faces contorted by horror and anger.... An Uzbek woman, the secretary of the rayon party committee, as I recall, gave shelter in her home to 100 terrified casualties and went out to meet the infuriated mob. In a yard near Fergana, I picked up from beneath my feet a note in a child's handwriting: A young girl had written in a letter to her brother in the Army that Papa and Mama were working and that all were alive and well and doing alright.... The night before, the whole family had been wiped out. This incident was, evidently, the last straw, scarring the heart and the memory. The lessons of history are always costly. And a person who cares more about his own health than about the fate of near ones and dear ones and about the fate of the motherland is hardly capable or deserving of being called a statesman.

Union in Support of Crimea Election Plank

944K0945A Simferopol KRYMSKIYE IZVESTIYA in Russian 23 Mar 94 p 2

[Election platform of the party "Union in Support of the Republic of Crimea" signed by the Political Council of the party: "Opportunities for the Strong, Protection for the Weak"]

[Text] The development of society in the interests of all strata of the population is the key idea of the program documents of the party "Union in Support of the Republic of Crimea." The goal of our party is to ensure that man, his rights and freedoms, labor and welfare become the real values of the society in which we live. To this end, our Republic should become an economically strong, democratic, rule-of-law state.

The SPRK [Union in Support of the Republic of Crimea] has already accomplished, in cooperation with other parties, politicians, and representatives of the business

communities of Ukraine and Russia, a number of specific endeavors that will be helpful in solving the economic problems of the Crimea:

—An agreement has been signed with the "Grinev-Kuchma" bloc and the Party of Russian Unity and Accord (Stankevich-Shakhray) on establishing permanent informational contacts; cooperation between the centrist forces of Ukraine, Russia, and the Crimea has thus been actually initiated;
—The holding of a conference of the centrist forces of Ukraine, Belorusia [Belarus], and Russia (possibly Moldova) in the Crimea in April has been agreed upon with a view to pooling our efforts in the advancement of the states toward an economic and political union;
—A package of documents containing specific studies of ways to overcome an economic crisis and stabilize the economic and political situation in the Crimea has been given to the president of the Crimea.

At present, the party is looking for ways to accomplish tasks that can overcome the chaos and ruin in the Crimea with the participation of economists, lawyers, and social science specialists.

1. A set of measures to carry out reform of the tax system of the Republic of Crimea is being developed. The essence of the reform is to reduce tax rates at the expense of nontax funds being taken in by the budget.

This reform will ensure:
—An increase in the profits and solvency of existing enterprises;
—The development of new enterprises;
—The creation of new jobs;
—An increase in output produced and services rendered;
—Greater welfare for the working people.

2. A program of measures to restore disrupted economic relations through economic cooperation with CIS countries is being developed:

—The simplification of mutual settlements and customs barriers between the Crimea, Ukraine, and Russia;
—The creation of local free economic zones with subsequent transition to an international free enterprise zone;
—The upgrading of Crimean ports and restoration of the Crimea- Caucasus railway ferry, with subsequent construction of the "Crimea- Russia" bridge;
—The creation of an international joint-stock airline (the Crimea-Ukraine-Russia) using the facilities of the Simferopol Airport and the takeoff and landing potential of the military bases in Belbek, Dzhankoy, and Bagerovo;
—The creation of joint Crimean-Russian wine-making, tobacco- growing, silk-producing, seed-producing, and sheep-breeding enterprises.

3. The privatization program we propose can stop the process of hidden privatization, i.e. the secret pilfering of public property, and make this a truly people's privatization.

The key stages of the program are:

—Adopting the Law on Privatization, which takes into account the specifics of the region, analyzes the mistakes and crimes that have been allowed to occur, and codifies the priority status of labor collectives in both industry and agriculture;
—Taking a complete inventory with the participation of the public, the deputy corps, trade unions, and independent experts in order to analyze in detail all changes in the form of ownership;
—Reinforcing criminal liability for secretly changing the form of ownership.

4. Our social programs guarantee opportunities for the strong and protection for the weak:

—The preservation of free education and health care, along with paid education and health care;
—Material support for motherhood and childhood;
—A minimum retirement benefit corresponding to the level of the subsistence minimum;
—Long-term easy credit to young people for the construction and acquisition of housing, with a proportion of the loan being written off after the birth of each child;
—Easy credit to young people to learn a profession or retrain.

A program for supporting agriculture—the main sector in the economy of the Crimea:

—The immediate payment of accumulated arrears by the state;
—Easy credit to agricultural producers;
—The lifting of existing restrictions on the area of land grants;
—Long-term, indefinite land leases with right of inheritance for those who work the land;
—Respect for all forms of ownership.

In the name of human health and the conservation of unique nature in the Crimea, all construction, land, military, and economic projects should be carried out in keeping with the Law "On Environmental Protection" and should undergo ecological reviews.

Stage-by-stage demilitarization of the peninsula, with the potential of the military-industrial complex being used in the interests of the Crimea.

The Republic of Crimea must become a symbol of peace and welfare. All nations residing in the Republic should have equal opportunities to develop their ethnic cultures.

Reorganization of law enforcement organs in conjunction with their reliable outfitting should become a guarantee of protection of the life, dignity, rights, and freedoms of citizens of the Crimea.

We come out against the reforms that have robbed the people and turned a majority of them into beggars. All labor has lost prestige, whereas speculation, bribery, and

plunder have become prestigious. We have created the "Union in Support of the Republic of Crimea" in order to bring this outrage to an end and prevent the worst from happening.

We count on support from all those who create material and intellectual assets and who are concerned about the fate of the Crimea.

Let us help the Republic together!!!

[Signed] SPRK Political Council

Antiterrorism Department Chief Views Situation

WS2303153994 Kiev UKRAYINA MOLODA in Ukrainian 18 Mar 94 p 7

[Interview with Lieutenant Colonel Viktor Burlakov, chief of the department for combating terrorism at the Ukrainian Security Service Administration, by unidentified UKRAYINA MOLODA correspondent; place and date not given: "Terrorism Will Not Pass"]

[Text] As indicated by its name, the main purpose of the Administration for Protection of National Statehood and Combating Terrorism and all relevant subunits of local governments is to detect and investigate crimes of a terrorist nature. This is why the administration and the local "T" units, in conjunction with other law enforcement agencies, the Ukrainian State Border Committee, and customs services, undertake operational actions to prevent illegal imports and the spreading of firearms and ammunition on Ukrainian territory. They reveal illegal pressuring of state and government officials, such as explosion, arson, and other methods, and conduct operational searches for authors and disseminators of anonymous documents containing evidence of plotting and criminal activities, whose investigation rests with the Ukrainian Security Service [SBU]. Those subunits are also in charge of counterintelligence tasks to counter anti-Ukrainian subversive terrorist actions.

[Correspondent] How acute is the issue of terrorism in Ukraine?

[Burlakov] Fortunately, no activities of organizations resorting to what is typically considered as a terrorist act in their political or religious struggle were reported in Ukraine. However, a kindling ground for this is now being cultivated in the state, abetted by the flawed legislation and the ever increasing legal nihilism on the part of both specific individuals and entire public groups. In 1993, 172 cases of terrorist threats and attempts on the lives of government officials, deputies, and judges were reported, compared to 110 in 1992. Attempts by criminals and ultraradical individuals to acquire firearms, ammunition, and explosives, with which 762 aggravated crimes were committed, became very frequent. Given the danger to society posed by illegal possession of firearms and ammunition as well as their possible use in staging terrorist acts and other crimes, the SBU and the Interior Affairs Ministry [MVS] conducted several joint operations in 1993 resulting in the seizure of 1351 units of firearms, including 79 grenade launchers, 10 machine guns, 111 assault guns, 103 rifles, 451 hand pistols, and 2517 grenades—a substantial increase since last year.

[Correspondent] Could you give examples of specific cases that were successful?

[Burlakov] Last year in January, agents from our administration, in conjunction with the SBU Chief Administration, foiled a conspiracy by one of the Middle East terrorist organizations to prepare in Ukraine a terrorist act against a foreign embassy based in Moscow. As a result, we confiscated grenades and explosives. We also prevented another foreign terrorist organization from purchasing in Ukraine equipment for conducting terrorist acts in other regions of the world. We have some evidence that due to its poorly patroled borders and some other factors, international terrorism has already "zeroed in" on Ukraine.

In late 1992, much attention was attracted by the case of V. Yukhno, deputy of the Kherson City Council and head of the Ukrainian Democratic Party Kherson-based organizations, who was severely beaten by unidentified individuals, and died in the hospital on 1 December 1992. Some media and public organizations, prior to completion of the investigation, classified this tragedy as a terrorist act, accusing government institutions, the SBU, and MVS of inaction. Some even went as far as to suggest that law enforcement agencies abetted perpetrators of that murder. A special commission that included experienced agents from the Internal Affairs Administration and the Security Service Administration in Kherson Oblast was established to investigate the case. As a result of the commission's investigation, the culprits were found. They were adolescents aged 16 to 17, who had committed more than 10 assaults and robberies. Two of them were convicted. The version claiming political reasons behind that crime, which was examined by our employees in great detail, was not borne out by the investigation.

In September 1993, the Internal Affairs Administration in Vinnytsya and Kharkov Oblasts along with the militia detected and broke up a criminal group that included residents of the above oblasts, as well as residents of the Dniester region. We confiscated 1,000 "F-1" grenades, 59 grenade launchers, two trotyl cartridges, 32 smoke pots, 100 electric detonators, 10 signal pistols, and 6 meters of safety fuse—all stolen some time ago from warehouses of the 14th Army of the Russian Federation.

Last year, we found in Pervomaysk, Dniepropetrovsk Oblast, the authors, manufacturers, and distributors—all local residents—of leaflets containing provocative and threatening statements that were sent to the City Council chairman. It turned out that they were motivated by personal animosity toward the above official.

Also established were authors of anonymous letters sent to deputies V. Chornovil. O. Moroz, V. Ismalkov, S. Ostroushchenko, and others.

[Correspondent] What organizations or groups in Ukraine pose the greatest threat of terrorism?

[Burlakov] Today, such a threat is posed by attempts on the part of some ultraradical members of the Ukrainian National Self Defense, who do not rule out violence in their struggle for power. This organization sends its activists to fight in conflict zones (the Dniester region, Georgia). Over the past year, four units of firearms, 14 grenades, 10 explosive devices, and some 400 cartridges were confiscated from them. One should not write off criminal groupings and certain so-called defensive formations, used to prepare and carry out terrorist actions and other aggravated crimes, as well as emissaries of international terrorist organizations.

[Correspondent] What obstacles do you encounter in fighting terrorism at present?

[Burlakov] Of course, difficulties in building a new Ukrainian state affect the formation of profoundly different organs from the former KGB and other security agencies. Our administration, as the SBU as a whole, are in the process of organization. This causes problems hindering our antiterrorist measures. Cadre is the most important thing. Our administration is currently staffed only at 59 percent. Of those, two-thirds do not have sufficient operational experience. The organization is poorly equipped, especially with computers. In addition, current legislation calls for particular improvement of Article 58 of the Criminal Code "Attempt at the Life of State Officials." We are talking about combating terrorism, but the state failed to come up with its concept of such a fight. There is no legal definition of what the meaning of "terror" or "terrorist acts" in the Criminal Code are.

In spite of all those difficulties, we work to overcome them and believe in the success of our work.

Belarus

World Bank To Grant $600 Million Credit to Republic

WS2203210694 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 1815 GMT 22 Mar 94

[Text] The World Bank will grant huge credits to Belarus. [words indistinct] will receive [word indistinct] to $600 million in accordance with a memorandum signed by Belarusian Prime Minister Vyacheslav Kebich and [name indistinct], chairman of the World Bank mission to Belarus. The loans are being issued for 15 years with a delay in the first payment. By the way, the World Bank had already extended two credits to Belarus: Around $17 million for reforming the management bodies, and $120 million—for importing vital resources and goods.

Russian Official on Planned Monetary Merger

WS2403121594 Minsk NARODNAYA GAZETA in Russian 19 Mar 94 p 2

[Interview with Petr Filippov, chief of the Russian President Administration Analytical Center for Socio-economic Policy, by Vladimir Samoylov; place and date not given: "Do Not Count on Privileges But Speed Up Your Reforms..."]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] [Samoylov] What is your opinion on the unification of the Belarusian and Russian monetary systems?

[Filippov] In my analytical report, I wrote that the unification of the Russian and Belarusian monetary systems is inadmissible in the form it is currently being envisioned.

[Samoylov] The saddest thing is that, in Belarus, nobody, aside from a narrow circle of people, knows all details of the upcoming agreement, despite numerous reports. Discussions on this issue generally concern the very idea of unification and its intentions.... As everybody knows, however, the road to hell is paved with good intentions....

[Filippov] We knew about all the shortcomings of this agreement. It would be an economic absurdity if banks that issue money united, and the Central Bank of Russia became the main bank, but their budgets and the bodies that draft them did not unite.

[Samoylov] What threat is associated with this?

[Filippov] Russia would lose several trillion rubles. Belarus would be threatened with upheavals connected with the fact that its macroeconomic indexes, such as the level of wages, are different. This would inevitably lead to tension. Certain Belarusian products would not be competitive on the Russian market.

[Samoylov] They are already uncompetitive. The government claims that this is due to expensive energy resources and high customs duties.

[Filippov] This could be resolved by signing a civilized agreement on free trade and customs union. If we abolish customs duties, internal and external prices will be equalized.

[Samoylov] Many Belarusians have the same opinion. We are being told, however, that there is no sense in arguing, since everything has already been arranged, and [Russian Prime Minister] Chernomyrdin will soon arrive to sign the documents....

[Filippov] My opinion is one, Chernomyrdin's is another....

[Samoylov] What is the opinion of [Russian President] Yeltsin? Can the president interfere once the agreement is already signed?

[Filippov] Yes, he can. He stated in his annual address that "any unifications and unions are possible, however, without damaging Russia." I will repeat: If the monetary systems are unified, this will become a millstone around Russia's neck.

[Samoylov] This is very likely to happen however. Certain doubts are raised here. For example, your miners are not paid for months, and entire regions are left without money. Is there a threat that Belarus will end up in the same situation following the unification of the two monetary systems?

[Filippov] The problem does not lie here. It does not require much effort to ceaselessly print "zaychiks" [Belarusian currency]—as your government does—to cover budget shortages, which triggers inflation and price hikes.

The Russian Government endeavors to prevent the unnecessary issuing of money. Sometimes this even leads to undesired results. for instance, Finance Minister Fedorov did not print additional money, and he did not pay peasants for grain ordered by the state. He did not pay the defense industry for tanks and missiles either. The defense industry was not able to pay the metallurgical branch, which was not able to pay miners. Nevertheless, the government can be blamed only partially for this.

The delays in payments are also connected with the fact that commercial structures do not pay one another either. They spent their money, for example, on privatization, or simply transferred the money abroad. The strike in Nadyma erupted when the oil industry refused to exchange their hard currency for rubles and pay construction workers.

Such phenomena are regulated by the law in the West. In Russia, as well as in Belarus, there is a gap in the law.

Our principle is that money should be earned, and we will stick to this.

[Samoylov] Many people here fear that the merger will be followed by a rapid influx of Russian shadow capital, which will "prikhvatize" [coined from the word "privatize" and the Russian word for "appropriate"—"prikhvatit"] our economy immediately....

[Filippov] Russia's current commercial structures have some $17 million in foreign bank accounts. Do you think that it is impossible to transfer at least part of this money to your republic right now, and eat Belarus up, lock, stock, and barrel? Even Switzerland can be eaten up.

[Samoylov] I think that Switzerland is beyond your capacity. It is a powerful state with clever laws....

[Filippov] Capital flows to those countries which have better working conditions and legal guarantees. That is why it comes from Russia. I am convinced that its outflow from Belarus, rather than its influx to this country, will be even greater.

[Samoylov] It is this that is happening. By hook or by crook, all enterprises leave their profits in Russian or other banks.

[Filippov] This is natural. Nevertheless, our reform has gone much farther. Our inflation rate is lower. The key thing is that there is the hope in Russia that reform will be completed. While in your country.... It is enough to take the draft law on fixed prices alone....

I suppose that the first country to fall into the abyss of the terrible economic crisis will be Ukraine. Belarus will follow suit, while Russia will pull out of the crisis....

[Samoylov] What would you advise us in this situation?

[Filippov] Not to count on privileges that the merger of the currency systems is supposed to bring, but to speed up reform and implement a tough financial policy.

Kebich, Shushkevich Comment

LD2403205694 Moscow NTV in Russian 1900 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Excerpts] Russia and Belarus are moving toward monetary union. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] In Stanislaw Shushkevich's opinion:

[Shushkevich, interviewed at home] If monetary union is a payment for Russia agreeing to a customs union, I am for a union of this kind. If it is yet another game, and we have monetary union but there will be no customs union, I am categorically opposed to it.

[Correspondent] It is true that the political games behind this agreement are quite convoluted. It is interesting that Prime Minister Vyacheslav Kebich even agrees that the rumors of a political plot in Moscow may be connected with an attempt to disrupt the agreement on monetary union between the two countries.

[Kebich, interviewed standing in corridor] It could be, yes. Unfortunately I cannot exclude that. [passage omitted]

Hryb on Economic Union, Reform, Crime

WS2403190494 Minsk ZVYAZDA in Belarusian 22 Mar 94 pp 1,3

[Interview with Belarusian Supreme Soviet Chairman Mecheslaw Hryb, by Uladzimir Hoytan, place and date not given: "Without a Real State Structure There Can Be No Real Power"]

[Excerpt] [Hoytan] What is being done today to prevent a further economic slump?

[Hryb] Unfortunately, so far, there have been no concrete changes for the better. To some extent, this is because we announced the formation of an economic union with Russia and a single ruble zone a long time ago. This somehow restrained people and prevented them from taking active measures to develop production. Enterprise, kolkhoz and sovkhoz managers, as well as ordinary people were waiting for the unification to occur. Special hopes were pinned to an exchange rate of 1:1. Many people thought: Why invest Belarusian payment bills in anything, when tomorrow I may receive valuable Russian rubles for them. Mutual payments between enterprises and even states were stopped, because everyone was thinking: When? I do not know who is to blame for prolonging unification; everybody acted in good faith. However, not everything depended on us—there was the Russian side, too. There are advocates and opponents of this "marriage" both in our Republic and in Russia. The entire affair has been dragging on for too long. That is why we, the Supreme Soviet, had to discuss the issue of a credit-monetary system. The question was asked squarely: Until the issue of an economic union with Russia is finally resolved, payment bills should be granted the status of full-fledged money. We should decide and explain to the people what we do next—form a unified monetary system or make our payment bill the only legal tender on our territory.

We are very concerned with other economic problems, too. In particular, these are our old ailments: A need to liquidate customs barriers and grant our products wider access to the Russian market, because our industries have always been oriented toward the latter. Without this, we will hardly resolve our other problems.

[Hoytan] Once there was a suggestion to unilaterally liquidate customs posts on the border with Russia. How do things look in reality?

[Hryb] Such declarations were voiced, all right. However, this has not led to anything. We do not have a customs union with Russia thus far. If we managed to liquidate customs posts, the cost of our products would

be some 40 percent lower, regardless of the high prices for power resources. I believe that the issue of an economic union with Russia has not been removed from the agenda yet. However, this unification may last longer and be carried out step- by-step.

[Hoytan] What measures are envisioned for a structural reshaping of production? For instance, for a couple of years now we have been speaking about producing Belarusian cars. What for? Are we seriously planning to catch up with Japan, South Korea, the United States, Germany, and France in the motor industry?

[Hryb] In my opinion, priority should primarily be given to high-tech industries in which we have an appropriate material base and a qualified staff. However, it will take time to introduce these structural changes. In general, we do not aim to catch up with anybody. We should develop those industries in which we have certain experience and with which we can easily enter the world market. Nobody in the West would sell us designs yielding huge profits; most probably they will try to palm off today's or even yesterday's technologies. With regard to the conversion of our defense industries, we have a certain plan which will soon be discussed by the Supreme Soviet.

We are planning to form a nonstaff economic council subordinated to the Supreme Soviet chairman. The council will be comprised of 25 leading economists. We are also going to form a nonstaff committee for legal issues made up of leading lawyers. The main authors of the Constitution will become members of the committee.

[Hoytan] A couple of weeks ago, the Russian Gazprom almost brought the Republic to her knees by announcing a dramatic reduction of gas shipments. What is being done to improve the situation and avoid these kinds of cataclysms in the future?

[Hryb] We have managed to resolve this issue. Besides, the Russian side brought the price down from $80 to $50 per cubic meter. A governmental delegation headed by Deputy Council of Ministers Chairman Stanislaw Bryl visited Moscow to discuss this issue. Moreover, we have reached an agreement to recalculate gas payments as of January 1994.

[Hoytan] Let us now address the topic which is more familiar to you, that of fighting crime. What measures does the Supreme Soviet and the government take to normalize the criminous situation?

[Hryb] The increase in crime is an acute problem in both Belarus and other CIS states, where the criminous situation is no better. While the disruption of the single economic space brought about most negative economic consequences, the disruption of the single legal space had an even more dramatic effect on the increase in crime. Besides, for a long time there were no state structures in the Republic; in fact state power was absent altogether. In other words, without a real state structure there can be no real power.

That was why the Supreme Soviet has recently directed all its efforts to adopt a constitution. The Constitution has been passed and it precisely distinguishes between legislative, executive, and judicial powers. Our Republic is going to be presidential. All this will add prestige to the executive power and will make it possible to step up the fight against crime and corruption. At the same time, we have drafted a special program on fighting organized crime. The program will have been discussed by the Supreme Soviet Presidium and the government by 1 April. Incidentally, we have never had a similar program before. The issue of fighting crime is being treated at the state level for the first time ever. [passage omitted]

Disagreements Remain With Russia on Currency Talks

LD2503100094 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0322 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Report by Nikolay Zherebtsov and Andrey Petrovskiy from the "Presidential Bulletin"]

[Text] During their talks in Minsk, the Prime Minister Vyacheslav Kebich and the Chairman of the Committee of the Russian Parliament's Upper House on Budget and Finances Nikolay Gonchar agreed to integrate their countries monetary systems on the principles laid down in a statement jointly issued by the Prime Ministers of Belarusia [Belarus] and Russia.

Belarusian Premier's spokesman Vladimir Zametalin told this to Interfax and said that the sides had decided to fix single fuel prices, exchange their currencies on a one to one basis, and recognize the National Bank of Belarusia as the chief bank of this sovereign state.

Each of the two countries will have a budget of its own; however, some joint programs, including those on military matters and efforts to eliminate the effects of the Chernobyl disaster, will be funded "from a joint treasury", Zametalin stressed.

He also noted that "unjustified delay regarding monetary integration accords has elevated this problem to a parliamentarian level."

Meanwhile speakers at the hearings on the problems and prospects of relations with Russia held in the parliament's lower house by the committees for CIS affairs, contacts with compatriots, and economic policy noted that Moscow and Minsk still differed on monetary integration.

For one thing, they have not agreed on what rate the Belarusian ruble be exchanged to the Russian ruble. Nor is there unanimity on levelling up the prices of Belarusian and Russian commodities and on combining budgets.

The basic difference, as was pointed out at the hearings, is that on the status of the Belarusian National Bank. The Russian side suggests that by 31 December 1994 the

Belarusian National Bank be transformed into a branch of Russia's bank with the transfer of all assets and liabilities to it. It also proposes that Russian laws be applied to banking and currency exchange on the territory of Belarusia. However, Belarusian experts deem it necessary to retain the national bank's right to control a combined monetary system in Belarusia and disapprove efforts to subordinate the Belarusian bank to the bank of Russia.

The Vice-Chairman of Russia's Central Bank Dmitriy Tulin believes that "the monetary system now being created will lack vitality and stability, if Belarusia's bank does not become a branch of Russia's bank." He stressed that although in theory any degree of responsibility could be agreed, such agreement would hardly prove workable.

Tulin doubted that the number of participants in a new monetary union should be extended before Russia and Belarusia combine their monetary systems.

The Deputy Economics Minister Sergey Ignatiyev, for his part, emphasized that "a treaty cannot be equal in principle," and "a single currency must have one master." The document, in his view, should stipulate that the Belarusian side sacrifices part of its sovereignty on fiscal matters and has to give in to Russia's demands.

The Deputy Foreign Economic Relations Minister of Russia Georgiy Gabonya declared that his department favoured monetary integration; however, without political unity there is no sufficient guarantee that the accords will be implemented. A monetary integration accord, in his opinion, will lead to "the creation of a common fence to the rest of the world", which will necessitate single import-export duties and quotas, and single rules for trade with third countries.

Moldova

President Gives Priority to Relations With Romania

LD2503100994 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0322 GMT 25 Mar 94

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature No. 57 (547); compiled by NIkolay Zherebtsov, Andrey Petrovskiy and edited by Vladimir Shishlin]

[Text] The presidential press service reported to INTERFAX that as before Moldova will give priority to friendly relations and cooperation with Romania and other neighboring states. Snegur declared this at a meeting with Romania's state secretary Florentin Popa, head of the army equipping department, and Romania's State adviser Ioan Roshka.

According to the presidential press service, the parties discussed a draft treaty on cooperation between the armed forces of the two countries and pointed to the significance of Romania and Moldova joining NATO's Partnership for Peace program. During the meeting Snegur received a letter from Romanian President Ion Iliescu in which the latter expresses hope that the relations between the two states will develop fruitfully and will assist in overcoming any difficulties related to the transfer to a market economy.

Talks on Russian Army Pullout To Resume 5 April

LD2503094494 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1356 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Report by ITAR-TASS correspondent Fyodor Angeli]

[Text] Chisinau 24 March, TASS—The eighth round of Russian-Moldovan talks on the status and deadline for the withdrawal of the 14th Russian Army from Moldova is due to get under way in Chisinau on 5 April, an official of the Russian Embassy in Moldova told TASS.

Moldova continues to press for unconditional pullout of Russian troops from the Republic by 1 July 1994. As for the Russian side, it links the withdrawal shcedule to Moldova's granting a special status to its breakaway Dniester region. Russia has recently stepped up considerably its activities aiming to settle the Dniester conflict. At the moment, the Russian president's special envoy Vladilen Vasev is staying in the region as a mediator between Moldovan authorities and the self-proclaimed Dniester Republic. The Russian diplomat has already met with moldovan President Mircea Snegur, parliament speaker Petru Lucinski and Dniester leader Igor Smirnov. He informed them about Russia's proposals, which could form the basis for resolving the protracted Dniester crisis.

Moldovan and Romanian newspapers are still exaggerating rumours that the 14th Russian army may be turned into a Russian military base in this region. The Moldovan head of state flatly dismissed the rumours. But other republican leaders and Russia's official representatives in Chisinau decline to give any comments.

The CSCE mission in Moldova has recently declared again for unqualified withdrawal of foreign troops from Moldovan territory and expressed grave concern over the lack of progress in settling the problems of the Republic's eastern regions.

Tiraspol Authorities Prepare for Dialogue With Chisinau

LD2403155194 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1145 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] The Transdniestrian administration is getting ready to resume its dialogue with Official Kishenev [Chisinau] to determine the political status of the Dniester's Left Bank regions. A source in the Foreign Ministry of the self-proclaimed Transdniestrian republic reported to INTERFAX that "the proposals of the CSCE

permanent mission in Moldova and proposals of the Russian Federation are to become the starting point for these negotiations."

According to the sources, the new stage of the negotiations may start in the near future, immediately after the new Moldovan parliament starts its work. This coincides with the proposals of the CSCE mission which pressed for resumption of negotiations after the parliamentary elections early this year. The source pointed out that at present an official envoy of the Russian president Vladlen Vasev takes the same position. The same source reported that in accordance with Russia's proposals "working groups will be formed at the new stage of negotiations, in addition, plenipotentiary representatives of Moldova's and Transdniestria's presidents will be appointed to coordinate the negotiating process along with President Yeltsin's envoy." The final decision on the time of the resumption of bilateral consultations to be held under the mediation of Russia and the CSCE mission is expected to be adopted this week after the conclusion of Vasev's visit to Kishenev and Tiraspol.

Kazakhstan

Nazarbayev, Gonalez Address Madrid News Conference

LD2503101694 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 2037 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Report by ITAR-TASS special correspondents Gennadiy Kulagin and Vladimir Shekhovtsov]

[Text] Madrid, 24 March—Kazakhstani President Nursultan Nazarbayev, who is here on an official visit, held talks today with Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez. At a joint press conference after the meeting, both leaders stressed that it was constructive and frank and voiced the hope that the first official visit to Spain by the president of Kazakhstan and the documents signed in Madrid will promote the development of ties between the two states in a wide variety of spheres.

Replying to journalists' questions, Felipe Gonzalez noted the great potential for mutually beneficial cooperation with Kazakhstan in political, economic, cultural, and other spheres and also within the framework of international forums and organizations.

Nursultan Nazarbayev spoke at the press conference about the economic reforms being implemented in the republic, the strengthening of democratic processes, and the activity of the CIS. Because of the forthcoming official visit by the president of Kazakhstan to Moscow, he had to answer many questions from journalists regarding present and future relations with Russia.

Nursultan Nazarbayev said that Kazakhstan has had common bonds with the Russian people for over 200 years. Our policy is aimed at ensuring the very best relations with our large northern neighbor. We have a Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance that is the basis of stable relations between two neighboring friendly states.

What is happening in Russia now, the president went on, is happening throughout the CIS. So it is the desire of the presidents of the countries of the Commonwealth for the transition from one condition to another and the reforms being implemented to be evolutionary and to prevent major interstate or other conflicts. The main thing now is to tackle the economy. Right from the start I have called for integration because I am well aware how a single economy functioned in the state that was the USSR, when some were suppliers of raw materials and others were consumers. This market remains the main market for us today.

The euphoria of the initial years after independence is already passing. However, I said back in 1991 that sovereignty alone would not fill stomachs. But everyone thought that they would start selling their goods to the West. However the Western market was already full and only we needed those goods. So, the president said, Kazakhstan drew up the plan for the economic union and it was adopted in September. Unfortunately, the different approaches of different states is so far preventing this plan from being implemented in practice.

If the economic union is to work, we will have to conclude a monetary union and a customs union and coordinate foreign economic policy at least on the export of raw materials, as well as create a common parliament to bring our legislation into line. In other words, we need to do what Western Europe has been doing for 30 years. Bearing in mind our considerable experience of living together, we could reach this more rapidly.

Like all of us, Russia is now experiencing a difficult time in its history. The hopes of Kazakhstan and the hopes of the West should be linked primarily with the continuation of the process of democratization and socioeconomic reforms. All Russia's neighbors will benefit from the continuation of this path. I am confident, the president of Kazakhstan concluded, that no one will succeed in turning back the common trend towards progress.

People's Congress Leader on Current Situation

LD2403181494 Almaty KAZTAG in Russian 1200 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] [No dateline as received] Almaty—Olzhas Suleymenov, the leading public and state figure and poet, decisively rejected accusations by a group of the radically minded writers who enjoy popularity with Kazakhs of ignoring national interests. In response to an address, which has been published by the local official press "to realize his special responsibility to the Kazakh nation and correct his mistaken opinion," he made a statement in the regular issue of the newspaper 'People's Congress,' which is the voice of the People's Congress of Kazakhstan party.

The poet, the party leader, and the deputy of the Supreme Kenges says, in particular: I am experienced enough to understand that this publication of a writer's appeal in the official Kazakh newspapers has been fired against me and inspired by my permanent opponents, who as before prefer to remain in shadow. I used to believe, and I still believe, that national radicalism was and is the manifestation of political ignorance. Therefore, for several years I am trying to restrain the so-called patriots.

I and like-minded people in my party believe that "the course of history will lead us eventually to the creation of the confederation of Euroasian sovereign states, with the union between Russia and Kazakhstan being the nucleus of this economic-defense union. You write to me "we don't understand your suggestion. There is no nation in the world which doesn't strive to be independent. How can your speak about confederation, when our independence is only two to three years old?"

I want to explain this: confederation is the union of politically independent countries with their own presidents, governments, budgets, currencies, armies, parliaments, and constitutions. These countries are not subordinate to each other, they have a common economic and defense space, regulated by agreements which they sign. Borderlines between them are conventional. The states create the most-favored nation regime in trade and economy for each other.

President Nazarbayev has been working for this all these years—he simply doesn't use the word "confederation." Presumably this is because of his attitude to political terms.

Further on, Olzhas Suleymenov went on to note that those who have made accusations do not know history. "You are saying that up until recently Russia acted as an empire while Kazakhstan was a colony." These definitions might have been correct before 1917. Later on, both Russia and Kazakhstan became dependent on the bureacratic center.

I studied issues of colonialism and national-liberation movements over a period of thirty years. I travelled to Asiatic and African countries, former British, Portuguese, and French colonies. Can you imagine unskilled Englishman working, for example, in India and any Indian supervising his work? Or can you imagine Frenchman cultivating land in Africa, with his boss being from Senegal? Who is the slave and who is the colonizer?

Relations between Russia and Kazakhstan are difficult, says Olzhas Suleymenov. Therefore, now when Kazakhstan is facing a dilemma we have to be honest and objective in remembering the main landmarks of our history. These are: in the 18th century it was Russia who saved Kazakhstan from extermination; in the 19th century Kazakhstan became Russia's colony; in the 20th century we together with the Russian people fought and won. It was the Russian Federation who has given us our independence. This must be remembered. Independence.

The conclusion is: Kazakhstan can live without the Russian empire and Russia can develop successfully without Kazakhstan as its colony, but in the very near future they wouldn't be able to exist without each other as equal and sovereign states, since their histories are so interconnected. The current economic and other problems of the two countries is the proof of this.

"There is no future for our country if we won't understand this," summarises Suleymenov. "Kazakhstan and Russia have been united by our wise ancestors, let's not allow ignorance to divide us."

Tajikistan

Opposition Field Commander Said Detained

LD2503065894 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0641 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Report by ITAR-TASS correspondent Galina Gridneva]

[Text] Dushanbe, 25 March (TASS)—One of prominent field commanders of the Tajik armed opposition has been detained by Tajikistan security personnel in the Panj border district, a spokesman in the republican Security Ministry told ITAR-TASS on Friday.

The spokesman declined to give the name of the detained, pleading "the investigation interests and the safety of his family."

The first testimony given by the detainee are undoubtedly of interest and concern the whereabouts of an armed opposition group on the Afghan bank of the Panj River and its immediate plans in the efforts to destabilise the situation in that sector of the Tajik-Afghan border.

Security Minister: Domestic Opposition No Threat

LD2503105594 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0331 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] Tajik Security Minister Saydamir Zukhurov said in an interview with INTERFAX Thursday that the Tajik Armed Forces were capable of defending the Republic's independence and its people.

According to Zukhurov, the domestic opposition in Tajikistan represents no serious threat to the state. He pointed out that the opposition consisted of separate bandit formations in the mountain regions. He stressed that these opposition formations were only capable of committing terrorist acts and sabotage in distant populated centers.

Zukhurov supported the idea of political settlement in the Republic. He announced that negotiations between the official authorities and the opposition were being prepared.

Zukhurov also spoke for the further presence of CIS joint peacekeeping forces in Tajikistan. He said the peacekeeping forces must remain in the region until a final settlement of the situation in the Republic.

Opposition Leader Interviewed on Conflict

NC2203165594 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 10 Mar 94 p 15

[Third and last installment of an interview with 'Abdollah Nuri, a leader of Tajikistan's Islamic Movement

Party, with an unidentified JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI correspondent; place and date not given]

[Text] [JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] How do you assess the West's stances on and the role of Russia in Tajikistan's civil war?

[Nuri] Tajikistan's problem is not an ethnic, regional, or national one. It is not related to Tajikistan alone; it is a world problem. In other words, the war in Tajikistan does not involve only the Kulabs and the Khojands. The center of this war was all the Eastern and Western powers. When the first gathering was held [not further specified], more than 70 world correspondents came to Tajikistan and talked with them. They told all the Islamists that despite communist pressures they had preserved their religion and that if the expansion of Islam is not prevented in Tajikistan, the victory of the Muslims would be definite. Therefore, this was a plot that was hatched by the superpowers of the world. This was a plot that was engineered by the Zionists, executed by the United States, and implemented by Russia. Islam Karimov told the British that if Russia and Uzbekistan did not interfere in the Tajikistan war, an Islamic rule would be established. In other words, he proudly said: Since I, too, am someone who opposes Islamic regimes in the region, I am striving to annihilate Islamic fundamentalism. Thus, the Tajikistan problem is a world problem and the superpowers do not want an Islamic rule to be established. I have repeatedly said that Tajikistan is the door to Islam and the base of infidels. If the door to Islam is opened all the area that was formerly Muslim will turn to Islam and it will spread to all countries, but the infidels do not want this door to be opened. Thus, they have formed a barricade here from which they can attack regional areas; namely Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iran, as well as other countries.

The extremely weak economic situation in Tajikistan has made the communist leaders sell the country's independence. Abdullodzhanov, chairman of the Council of Ministers, said that we even want to adhere to Russia. Some 70 percent of Tajikistan's budget is supplied by Russia. That country wants to take this area to revive the former Soviet Union. Also, there is a threat against the United States here because some days ago Russia signed a military pact with Kuwait for the sale of arms and thus paved the way for its presence there. The creation of a small Russia in northern Afghanistan is not only a threat to the people in this country but to the West as well. The United States thinks that Russia is under its control today. But Russia is doing what it wants, such as selling arms to other countries. By taking Tajikistan, Russia wants to continue its plans and gain access to warm water ports, either through Afghanistan or Tajikistan. In this case, the world will be placed under Russia's control. What Russia is now doing is against U.S. policies as well.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] In view of the fact that the peace talks have reached an impasse, what plans does the Islamic Movement have? Does it consider talks with Russia and with the Tajik Government to be in its best interest?

[Nuri] The Islamic Movement and all its officials will not refrain from any type of talks. In other words, they want talks. But these talks should not be a political game. They should be genuine talks that will benefit the nation. The Islamic Movement wants to hold talks with Russia. Before talking with the communist leaders of Tajikistan, we want to hold talks with Russia because it has been the cause of many adversities in our country and the entire world knows that 70 percent of Tajikistan's budget is supplied by Russia. Therefore, talking with the communist leaders of Tajikistan is meaningless. We have held more than 16 rounds of talks during the civil war since we knew that this war was not in the interest of the nation and it would not benefit either Islam or the people. We tried our best to make the people understand the truth. But it was obvious that several power-hungry people were bent on destroying everything. The person who was responsible for the failure of the talks was Rakhmanov, who is the leader of Tajikistan today. When parliament was formed in Khodzhand, Rakhmanov tried to sweet-talk the people and called for peace. He gathered all the commanders together and made peace among them. We decided to end the bloodshed and to let peace be established. We had a plan that Rakhmanov did not accept.

The mujahidin commanders had told Rakhmanov that if he came to Dushanbe he would be welcomed with flowers, but he preferred to come with bloodshed. With his arrival in Dushanbe, murder and plunder started. House searches began and people were massacred. This happened because these people do not do their own thinking. Everything depends on Russia. This is why we want to hold talks with Russia so that we can understand its leaders' thoughts and stances and so that they will understand us, too.

We fully believe in divine promise. We are fully confident of the spirit of the mujahidin. Even if this war continues for years, we will win. The communists are condemned to defeat by the mujahidin because the communists have never been on the front lines of the war. They bring the Muslims and the children of Muslims to fight. It does not make any difference to them. We have been told that the Jews are teaching their women and children English so that they will be ready when the time comes to flee and go to America or other places. Their children are not sent to war so that they will not be killed. It is the children of the people of Tajikistan—90 percent of the Tajiks are Muslim—who go to war. There may be communist forces in some places, but it is mainly the children of the Muslims who are involved in the war. This is a world plot based on letting Muslims be killed by Muslims. Nevertheless, we believe that we can hold talks and solve problems through political means.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] What percent of the Tajik people are in the Islamic Movement and what role do Tajikistan's national and democratic forces play in the movement?

[Nuri] When the Islamic Movement was an official party known as the "Islamic Movement Party," it had its special members and cadres. But when we emigrated, this movement became a general movement of Tajikistan. In 1975 the Islamic Movement adopted an organizational form, while before that there were dispersed movements. When communist rule came to Tajikistan, the elders and the 'ulema continued this movement clandestinely.

In 1975, we gathered all the people's views into one place and prepared them for a struggle and for the expansion of Islam and of Islamic rights. Today, we can say that all the Muslims who are living for Islam at home or abroad are members of the movement.

The role of the national and democratic forces in the Islamic Movement, and especially in northern Afghanistan, is very good. In other words, the democratic and national forces and all the expert forces who were employed in communist establishments and factories are all under the umbrella of the Islamic Movement today and are working with us. They also shoulder important responsibilities in the movement. They believe that in Tajikistan only Islam can solve the political, economic, and social problems of the people and that no other group or organization can do anything. Other organizations also support us. Through many efforts and struggles by the Islamic Movement in Afghanistan, which has given all it could, we have been able to establish a coordination center in Moscow. In short, I should say that in our current struggles all the ethnic groups, parties, and organizations support us.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] What is your opinion of the human rights groups and their lack of support for the just demands of the Islamic Movement of Tajikistan and of the Muslims?

[Nuri] The behavior of human rights organizations toward us is surprising. There is a UN High Commission, which should help refugees and should not be dependent on any world policy. It should not differentiate among refugees, whether they are Tajiks, Uzbeks, communists, or Muslims. The UN Charter states that a calamity-stricken refugee should receive unconditional support.

But, unfortunately there are 40,000 refugees in Tanduz [place name as received]. Only 8,000 of them were assisted by the United Nations. This assistance was stopped later on. For example, there are refugees in Mazar-e Sharif who are under Dostam's control. They have been assisted. But the refugees in Emam Saheb and Tash Kurgan [place name as received], who were helped up to a point, were taken to Bandar-e Shirkhan on the Tajik-Afghan border to make them return to Tajikistan. They were told that anyone who wanted assistance should go to Bandar-e Shirkhan. Some refugees went there and were placed under UN control. They then encouraged them to return to Tajikistan, but without promising them security. You, too, heard that many people who were repatriated were executed. The Medecins Sans Frontieres Organization announced that Muslim Tajiks in Tuz who did not give in to communism were massacred. They were the ones who reported on the dire and restless situation in the area. But they are still encouraging the people to return. We cannot say that it is the UN employees who are to blame because others are also not pursuing UN laws, but there are between 40,000 and 41,000 refugees in Tanduz who are not receiving any assistance.

It is as though this organization does not officially recognize the refugees. Among their rights, which are not recognized, are education, health, and the protection of children. In their opinion, a needy person is someone who is not a Muslim and someone who professes Islam is not a human being. If a girl shoots at Husni Mubarak, the United Nations and the correspondents of the world will report on this extensively. But when children, women, and men are killed in wars and when young and old die of malaria or of other diseases, no one says anything. We have sent a letter to the UN offices in Mazar-e Sharif and in Pakistan and to Mr. Butrus-Ghali calling for humanitarian assistance for the refugees, but we have not received any reply yet.

With the help of UN personnel, the water of a reservoir in Mazar-e Sharif, which was used by refugees, was poisoned and in one day 32 children and 200 others died. Everyone knew about this, but nothing was done. Only the head of the refugees there was deceived. Thus, the behavior of human rights organizations toward the Tajik refugees has not been good until now.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] What are you asking from regional Islamic countries?

[Nuri] As I have stated, the Tajikistan problem is not a problem in our country alone. It is a problem that is linked to all the Muslim countries. We should not ignore this. For example, it has been a year since Tajiks began living under dire conditions in Tajikistan and northern Afghanistan. There are about 100,000 refugees in Afghanistan, some of whom do not have shelter. These refugees have not been officially recognized by the Afghan Government until now, and politically they are not even considered full refugees. No Islamic country in the world has recognized them as refugees. No reports are heard on radio and television on these people and their problems. Let them not help because we know that the world is under pressure by the superpowers. Also, the Islamic countries too are being pressured by superpowers. They cannot overtly help the jihad in Tajikistan today.

Armenia

Sargisyan Receives NATO 'Official Team'

NC2403215194 Yerevan Armenia's Radio First Program Network in Armenian 2000 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] The Armenian Defense Ministry Press Service has reported that Defense Minister Serzh Sargisyan received the members of the official team representing NATO's Partnership for Peace program on 23 March.

The meeting discussed Armenia's multisided participation in issues relating to the implementation of the NATO program. The Armenian side expressed readiness to assist in realizing the program because it aims at establishing lasting peace in the world.

An agreement was reached to organize meetings of specialists with the aim of creating effective mechanisms for cooperation.

The NATO delegation then visited the Armenian Foreign Ministry, where military experts held practical talks on the problems.

Papazyan on Partnership For Peace, Karabakh

BR2503121094 Brussels LA LIBRE BELGIQUE in French 25 Mar 94 p4

[Boris Toumanov report on interview with Armenian Foreign Minister Papazyan in Brussels; date not given: "Mr. Papazyan Pessimistic About Karabakh"]

[Text] Visiting Belgium this week to meet with officials from the European structures, Foreign Minister Papazyan of Armenia—a former Soviet republic—said Wednesday to LA LIBRE BELGIQUE that his country could quite soon join the Partnership for Peace program put forward by NATO. "In this connection I felt that the talk I had in Brussels with NATO Secretary General Manfred Woerner was very useful. His conceptual clarifications convinced me that it would be appropriate for us to cooperate with the Atlantic Alliance," he indicated. According to the Armenian minister, a NATO expert group will visit Armenia shortly to study the details of his country's possible membership in the Partnership for Peace program. The Armenian foreign minister, who feels that, generally speaking, the initiative is positive, would nevertheless like it to lead to the creation of precise mechanisms capable of ensuring stability in the CSCE's geopolitical area of responsibility, including of course the area of the former USSR.

Mr. Papazyan said that Armenia's position on this issue was quite close to Russia's. He also said that he has recently been holding a permanent dialogue with his Russian counterpart, Mr. Kozyrev, so that they can "coordinate" their respective positions on this matter. According to the Armenian minister, Armenia feels that the question of concrete security mechanisms within the framework of the CSCE is crucially important in so far as the efforts of the "Minsk Group" to resolve the problem of Karabakh have so far failed to bear fruit, precisely because of the absence of an instrument likely to achieve these efforts on the ground.

The Armenian foreign minister, who deplored the international community's detachment from the problems in the trans-Caucasus region, noted that the Russian Army represented the only potential guarantor of stability in that region, in so far as the West is clearly not prepared to send its intervention forces into the trans- Caucasus. At the same time he also made it clearly understood that the presence of international observers in this region would be essential to ensure not only stability but also to supervise Russian troops activity.

Speaking about the situation in Karabakh, Mr. Papazyan said that the negotiations currently continuing in Moscow between the representatives of Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Karabakh—with the mediation of Russia and the CSCE—have encouraged the truce that has recently emerged in the field. Nevertheless, he said he was rather pessimistic as to the possibility of seeing these negotiations lead to a feasible political solution to the conflict, "because it is highly probable that Azerbaijan once again views them [the negotiations] as an opportunity to regroup its forces in order to relaunch the offensive against the Armenians in Karabakh." According to Mr. Papazyan, "this war has already gone too far." The Armenian minister thinks that this tragic evolution of the conflict, which he feels, by the way, to be strictly Azerbaijan's internal problem, is primarily due to the fact that the Azeri leaders have never truly renounced their attempts to resolve the problem by military means. However, according to the Armenian foreign minister, any persistence by Baku in this direction is likely to force Armenia to intervene "for good" in this conflict, which risks taking on an especially dangerous international dimension.

Azerbaijani Losses Reported in South Karabakh

NC2403145194 Yerevan Armenia's Radio First Program Network in Armenian 1400 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] The Armenian Defense Ministry Press Service reports that calm prevails on the borders. Let me remind those who missed our previous newscasts that the Azerbaijani Army shelled Armenia's northeast border last night. Fire was opened on the defensive positions around Berdavan in Noyemberyanskiy Rayon. There are wounded. Our border guards did not retaliate.

Active military operations are continuing in the southeast of the Karabakh war front. Fierce battles continued in the direction of Fizuli yesterday for the control of hills overlooking Alkhanly. The Karabakh military units maintained all their positions in that sector. Some 40 enemy soldiers were killed and one tank and one artillery piece were destroyed. Two fighters were killed and 11 were wounded on the Karabakh side.

The Azerbaijani Air Force planes bombed the Karabakh positions around Fizuli this morning. We have received no reports on the consequences.

No substantial changes have taken place on the other fronts.

Karabakh as Part of Azerbaijan Said Unacceptable

LD2503093894 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0331 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] The proposal that Nagorno-Karabakh remains within the composition of Azerbaijan on the basis of a federal system is unacceptable, Secretary of the Armenian Parliamentary Commission on Nagorno-Karabakh, Suren Zolyan, told Interfax.

The proposal was put forward by Armenian permanent representative in Moscow, Felix Mamikonyan. He said it was naive to expect that the 170,000 Nagorno-Karabakh people would win over the 7 Mn Azerbaijani nation.

Zolyan repeated that a resolution was adopted by the Armenian Supreme Soviet on July 8, 1992, in accordance with which Armenia would recognize no document in which Nagorno-Karabakh is mentioned as an integral part of Azerbaijan.

Zolyan stressed that the will of the Nagorno-Karabakh people must be the decisive point when settling this issue. He pointed out that the independence of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic had been proclaimed through a nation-wide referendum.

Baku refuses to recognize the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic.

Zolyan spoke for the continuation of negotiations between the Azerbaijani and Karabakh leadership to search for a political settlement in the region.

Cabinet Meets To Discuss Nuclear Plant Reoperation

NC2403201394 Yerevan Armenia's Radio First Program Network in Armenian 1800 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Gevorg Nazaryan report on Council of Ministers Presidium extraordinary session at the nuclear power plant on 24 March]

[Text] Prime Minister Grant Bagratyan and ministers took part in the extraordinary session. The visit by the Presidium members to the plant was proof that the plant is at the center of the leadership's attention.

Inspecting the work being carried out there, we were convinced that much time and effort is needed to cool and reoperate the reactor. Suren Azatyan, director of the Armenian nuclear plant, gave detailed information to the officials on the situation at the plant and on the progress of the work.

The presence of the Republic's President Levon Ter-Petrosyan lent extra importance to the extraordinary session. The president chaired the meeting. Armenian Deputy Prime Minister Vigen Chitechyan delivered a report on the progress of the work to reoperate the nuclear plant.

The session established the bylaws of the Metsamor Nuclear Power Station Special State Enterprise attached to the Armenian Ministry of Energy and Fuel. Economy Minister Armen Yegiazaryan delivered a report on the system of payments and social security for the employees involved in the work to reopen the plant. Energy and Fuel Minister Miron Shishmanyan also spoke at the meeting.

Russian To Assist

PM2503112194 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1800 GMT 18 Mar 94

[From the "Novosti" newscast: Video report from Armenian nuclear power station by Vladimir Nazaryan]

[Text] [Nazaryan] A year ago, when it became obvious that the energy crisis in Armenia was insurmountable and that the situation was deteriorating with every passing winter, the republic government adopted the decision to de-mothball the nuclear power station at Metsamor. Eighteen months were set aside for reactivating one of the two 400 MW power units. However, soon it became clear that it was impossible to master this task single-handed, and that the station was not likely to resume production by the following spring.

The signing of a Russian-Armenian agreement has brought new hope. According to this document, all restoration work including recommissioning will now be carried out jointly. The Russian side will be responsible for all engineering and technical operations necessary to start up the station again, as well as for the delivery of nuclear fuel and all help required in training specialists. The Armenian side will be in charge of the safety and physical protection of the nuclear power station. Furthermore, Armenia guarantees that it will not make use of nuclear and other special materials needed at the nuclear power plant for the production of nuclear weapons or the achievement of any other military aims.

Azerbaijan

Air Strike on Karabakh Forces Near Goradiz

LD2503145094 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1400 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] This morning at dawn, Azerbaijani military planes dropped cluster bombs on the positions of Nagorno-Karabakh defense forces near the village of Goradiz. The SNARK agency learned this from the Karabakh army press service. According to this report, Azerbaijani soldiers were also affected, because bombs of this type have a considerable effect over a wide area.

It has also been reported that Karabakh's antiaircraft defense troops have prevented Azeri aircraft from delivering an air strike on Stepanakert. The information department of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic has interpreted this increased activity on the part of Baku as an attempt to put pressure on the Karabakh side during the consultations on the Karabakh issue currently under way in Moscow.

Ministry Reports Armenian Fighting Losses

NC2403175694 Baku Azerbaycan Radio Televiziyasi Television Network in Azeri 1600 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] The Defense Ministry Press Service has reported that following their unsuccessful attacks on 23 March, the Armenian units have regrouped their forces and are trying to break through our Army's defensive line.

Supported by six tanks and three armored cars, an enemy infantry battalion launched an attack from occupied (Gorgan) against our positions in Fizulinskiy Rayon on the afternoon of 23 March. Following fierce battles, which lasted until midnight, the Armenians were forced to withdraw after losing four tanks and an armored car. Some 300 soldiers were killed or wounded.

One of our armored cars was damaged and eight of our soldiers were killed and 22 wounded during the fighting.

Only positional fighting is continuing on the Agdamskiy, Terterskiy, and Kelbadzharskiy fronts. An enemy armored car was hit in Agdamskiy Rayon. Our troops have gained better strategic positions in Kelbadzharskiy Rayon.

Parliament To Ask Russia To Return Ex-Leaders

NC2403161294 Baku AZERTAC in Azeri 1307 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] Baku, 24 Mar (AZERTAC)—The Azerbaijani Supreme Soviet intends to ask the Russian Duma to return the former leaders of the Republic who are now living in Moscow, namely Abdul-Rakhman Vezirov and Ayaz Mutalibov.

This was stated by Azerbaijani Parliament Chairman Rasul Guliyev at today's session of the Republic's National Assembly (Parliament). The session continued to discuss the tragic incidents in Baku in January 1990.

According to the parliament chairman, the involvement of these two former high-ranking officials in the Baku massacre has been proven. The archives that came to light show that on the night of 20 January 1990 Abdul-Rakhman Vezirov, the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijani Communist Party, was in the headquarters of the Army unit stationed in Baku and, together with the former Soviet Defense Minister Dmitriy Yazov and the former Soviet Interior Minister Vadim Bakatin, directed the deployment of the special purpose detachments in the Azerbaijani capital.

The investigation has also revealed that Ayaz Mutalibov asked the former Soviet leadership to urgently send an additional contingent to Baku. The dispatch of this contingent resulted in a greater tragedy. Mutalibov exploited the situation to take power.

Claims to the effect that the Republic's leadership was unaware of the introduction of a state of emergency and the deployment of troops in Baku were also exposed as lies. The documents and witnesses attest that they knew of these developments a day before the tragedy.

Concern Expressed Over Reopening of Nuclear Plant

NC2403200094 Baku Azerbaycan Radio Televiziyasi Television Network in Azeri 1600 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] According to available information, the Armenian Republic has appealed to the Russian Federation over reopening the nuclear power station shut down following the Spitak earthquake in 1988. This report caused serious concern in Azerbaijan and in all the neighboring countries located in an unstable seismic zone.

The Azerbaijani Academy of Sciences and the Ecology and Environmental Protection Committee held a joint meeting today to discuss this issue in depth. It was announced that such nuclear stations, which are not up to international radiation safety standards and pose a serious threat to the surrounding region, cannot reoperate.

In view of this and to draw the international community's attention to the problem, the Azerbaijani scientists and specialists have appealed to the United Nations, the International Atomic Energy Agency, and the Ministries of Ecology in Russia, Turkey, Iran, and Georgia to seek their help in ensuring radiation safety for the region.

Georgia

NATO Delegation Arrives, Holds Talk

LD2403181694 Tbilisi IBERIA in Georgian 1545 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] Tbilisi, 24th—Based on information supplied by the press center of the Georgian Defense Ministry, IBERIA news agency reports that members of a NATO delegation visited the Georgian Defense Ministry. The visitors were received by Major General Guram Nikolaishvili and Major General Paata Datuashvili, the first deputy defense ministers.

A frank dialogue took place. Guram Nikolaishvili familiarized the visitors with the current situation in the Georgian Armed Forces, and said that the establishment of the Armed Forces was being carried out in the most difficult situation, but the establishment of the Army was an irreversible process and the Georgian military would not spare efforts to be adequate partners to their foreign colleagues in the task of protecting world peace.

According to the visitors, they are sympathetic toward Georgia, are aware of all problems facing the country on the road to independence and its Armed Forces. Members of the NATO delegation have familiarized the leadership of the Georgian Defense Ministry with a NATO program that has already been signed by Georgian Foreign Minister Aleksandre Chikvaidze, and which stipulates many aspects of military cooperation. It namely stipulates joint exercises and the high level training of officers. Appropriate offices are ready for this in Brussels.

It has been decided that an agreement on concrete issues will be worked out in April this year.

Shevardnadze Receives Delegation

LD2403184094 Tbilisi IBERIA in Georgian 1545 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] Tbilisi, 24 Mar—According to the Iberia news agency, the Georgian head of state, Eduard Shevardnadze, met a NATO delegation today. During the meeting, the head of state spoke of his striving towards friendship between NATO and Russia, Georgia, and the CIS states. He said that the restoration of Cold War would stir up reactionary forces, and this could be tragical in effect for many small countries. Today, when even the United Nations fails to render a real help to this or that country in the settlement of a conflict, NATO's role as that of a guarantor of stability has further increased, Shevardnadze said.

The head of the NATO delegation, an official representative of the Republic of Turkey in NATO, Tugay Ozceni, welcomed Georgia's joining the Partnership for Peace initiative. He said NATO intended to extend the cooperation with Georgia including the military sphere.

Chikvaidze Speaks Following Partnership Signing

LD2403174094 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Russian 1611 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] Yesterday Georgia officially joined the Partnership for Peace program, thus becoming the 12th eastern European region country to express their support for the NATO initiative. The document on the partnership was signed by Georgian Foreign Minister Aleksandre Chikvaidze.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, he voiced his hope for the deployment of UN troops in Abkhazia, which has declared its independence from Georgia, in order to secure the return of displaced people to their homes from the territory of Abkhazia.

Abkhaz Units Seize Village in Gulripsha Region

LD2503134694 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1220 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] After heavy fighting on Friday morning, Abkhazian units have seized the village of Nizhnya Lata in the republic's mountainous region of Gulripsha where Georgian forces entrenched themselves after being driven out of Sukhumi last fall, Abkhazian military officials told Interfax.

Regional fighting renewed on Thursday after two Georgian battalions supported by armor had tried to break through tunnels in Kodor Pass.

A deputy Abkhazian defence minister described the attack as well- prepared but Abkhazian troops stepped in quickly to suppress it.

Two Georgian tanks were destroyed as well as one artillery piece and one rocket launcher. Several Abkhazian soldiers were injured.

The Abkhazian defence ministry fears a possible attack on Abkhazian positions amid reports of Georgian troop concentration along the Ingur river separating the two sides.

In the meantime, head of Abkhazia's pro-Georgian government Zurab Erkvania told our correspondent in Tbilisi that the Abkhazians burnt down the village of Nabakevi in the Gal region.

Abkhazians on Offensive Near Kodor

LD2503093494 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0337 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] Hostilities between the Abkhazian army and the Georgian formations blockaded in the Kodor Canyon (17 kilometers away from Sukhumi) since September 1993, started on Thursday morning and continued throughout the day. The Abkhazian Defense Ministry told Interfax that the Abkhazian army had taken the initiative and forced the Georgian formations to retreat to the canyon. According to the Abkhazian Defense Ministry, the Georgian side suffered casualties. The Georgian troops also lost two tanks, a Shilka anti-aircraft mounting and several artillery weapons.

Non-official sources maintain that there are up to 1,500 people in the Georgian formations and a large amount of military equipment. Abkhazian military experts believe that if the Georgian formations break the blockade they will secure an advantageous position for sabotage and other military operations, including in Sukhumi (the Abkhazian capital).

The Abkhazian Defense Ministry told Interfax that a significant number of Georgian servicemen and military armored equipment had been gathered on the Georgian-Abkhazian border lying on the Inguri River.

Most Georgian servicemen were gathered near the populated center of Jvari which is quite close to the Inguri Hydro Electric Power Station, Abkhazian intelligence reported.

Shevardnadze Comments on Fighting

LD2403172994 Moscow NTV in Russian 1600 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Video report by unidentified correspondent, including recorded comment by Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze]

[Excerpt] [Correspondent] Media information today on combat activities in the Kodor Canyon of Abkhazia between a local Svan population group and Vladislav Ardzinba's armed formations was also confirmed by the Georgian head of state, who also holds the post of defense minister. Eduard Shevardnadze said the initiator of the combat activities was the Abkhazian side, attempting for the third time to dislodge the Svan population from Kodor Canyon. As a result of previous attacks, the Abkhazians had succeeded in advancing and occupying the so-called [words indistinct]. The Georgian Defense Ministry told us today that the Abkhazian side opened artillery fire this morning on villages in Kodor Canyon, leading to casualties among the civilian population. Regarding the armament of the Georgian population, Shevardnadze said:

[Shevardnadze] The equipment there is not in fact in working order. It is the equipment that was withdrawn following the evacuation of Sukhumi. It is not capable of carrying out combat tasks. If something is being done there, it is only self-defense, nothing more.

[Correspondent] Eduard Shevardnadze called the beginning of combat operations an attempt to disrupt the political settlement of the Abkhazian conflict.

[Shevardnadze] The question of beginning a new round of talks is now under discussion. The UN secretary general, his personal representative, is calling for it. I think this is the latest act [designed] to disrupt [the talks]. [passage omitted]

Ardzinba Expresses Readiness To Resume Talks

LD2303200394 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1725 GMT 23 Mar 94

[Text] Abkhazian leader Vladislav Ardzinba said Abkhazia was ready to resume its dialogue with Georgia, but not before the latter repealed its March 10 decision to disband Abkhazia's legislature and government.

"The resumption of war in Abkhazia will hardly be possible if the Georgian leadership takes a reasonable path," Ardzinba told Interfax and Abkhazian television on Wednesday.

He reiterated the Abkhazian leadership's demand that a U.N. peacekeeping force be deployed only along the Inguri River, marking the border between Abkhazia and Georgia.

Ardzinba said the leaders of the republics and regions of southern Russia and Abkhazia would be meeting in the Russian city of Krasnodar early next month. He expressed gratitude to the city's administration for organizing the meeting, which he expected to focus, among other things, on the problem of the border between Abkhazia and Russia.

Insists He Does Not Want War

PM2403132194 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 24 Mar 94 p 2

[Interview with Vladislav Ardzinba, chairman of the Republic of Abkhazia Supreme Soviet, by Svetlana Shipunova; place and date not given: "Between Peace and War"]

[Text] I last met with Vladislav Ardzinba at the end of August 1993, in Gudauta. At the time combat operations had not yet ceased on the territory of Abkhazia, but everything already pointed to the fact that Georgia had lost this war, and everyone was living in expectation of imminent victory and long-awaited peace. I talked with the Abkhaz leader about his vision of his republic's future after the war.

The war ended 30 September. Over the six months since then Abkhazia has not had time to heal its wounds and to restore normal life, particularly as Russia has maintained an economic blockade of the republic throughout the winter. And yet it has survived! A bread-baking plant, a tobacco factory, and even enterprises such as Sukhumpribor (the only plant in the former Union to produce ballpoint pen refills) have been restored and have started working. Public transport is functioning, and old people on pensions are provided with three free meals a day in enterprise cafeterias. In Sukhumi the seafront, public gardens, and parks have been cleared of obstructions and traces of fighting, and coffee shops and small stores have started opening. Of course things are difficult, there is no fuel or raw materials for enterprises, there is a food shortage, people live mainly on what they themselves grow, and there is a catastrophic shortage of money, since Abkhazia has been cut off financially from both Georgia and Russia.

It is difficult to organize a normal life for people—as much as 40 percent of the housing is in an unfit state, blocks have been destroyed, and apartments looted. A special housing commission, which includes old people, representatives of the intelligentsia, and participants in the war, is now working under the Sukhumi Administration. Housing authorizations (temporary ones) are issued primarily to families of deceased persons, to people whose homes have been burned down, and to invalids from last year's war. Refugees are returning little by little to Abkhazia—Russians, Armenians, Greeks, Georgians (but only those who did not participate in combat operations against it).

The agonizingly difficult process of restoring a peaceful life is exacerbated by the fact that there has been no political settlement of the Georgian-Abkhaz problem, and Abkhazia's status has not been defined.

With the onset of spring people have suddenly started speaking once again of war and the possible resumption of combat operations on Abkhazian territory. The situation in this region has again started to exacerbate, and tension is increasing day by day. I talked about this with Vladislav Ardzinba, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Abkhazia. He had just returned from a big foreign tour—he had been to Switzerland, New York, and Moscow, where he met with officials and gave news conferences.

"Surely not war again?" I asked him. "How do you rate the likelihood of such a development of events?"

[Ardzinba] There are at least two circumstances that are intensifying aggressive sentiment in the Georgian leadership and prompting it to attempt to take revenge. These are, first, the signing of the treaty with Russia and, second, the support which Shevardnadze has once again received in the West, particularly during his recent U.S. trip. I must remind you that, when the war was still being waged in our country, the Russian leadership made repeated statements to the effect that no treaty would be signed with Georgia until the situation in Abkhazia and South Ossetia had been settled in full. But, despite its own statements and despite the fact that there has been no settlement and, what is more, there is still a threat that combat operations will be resumed, Russia signed the treaty. At the same time it recognized Georgia's territorial integrity. What does this mean from a legal viewpoint? Only that Russia has no territorial claims on Georgia. But the Georgian leadership interprets this as recognizing that Abkhazia is part of Georgia, although that is another matter—a matter of our internal relations.

[Shipunova] Vladislav Grigoryevich, what danger do you see in the treaty concluded by Russia and Georgia?

[Ardzinba] The fact that it contains articles on the handover of arms to Georgia and on assistance for it in reorganizing the army. Thus, this is a repeat of the situation which existed in 1992, when Georgia obtained arms under the Tashkent Agreement—after which it at once unleashed aggression. Today, by undertaking to arm Georgia, Russia is again giving it carte blanche to wage war. Shevardnadze's repeated statements, notably at a UN Security Council session, that the situation could get out of control have certainly not been accidental. Later he will most likely use them to justify renewing combat operations, particularly as there have already been several armed raids by Georgia in Galskiy Rayon, on the border.

[Shipunova] And yet the treaty has not yet been ratified, has it?

[Ardzinba] That is of no great importance, since a number of agreements have been signed in addition to the treaty, including agreements on the status of the border troops, on the status of the Russian Armed Forces on the territory of Georgia, etc., and these agreements include the same articles on military questions as the treaty itself. So these agreements have already started to be implemented, without any ratification. For example, Georgian youths will now be drafted into the border troops and will receive weapons; this work is already being developed.

[Shipunova] Did you make any attempt to prevent the signing of the treaty, and did you have contacts in this regard with anyone in the Russian leadership?

[Ardzinba] Unfortunately we are unable to have normal contacts with the leadership of Russia. All our appeals and warnings of the possible dangerous development of events have gone unheeded. Yet not only we but also many political forces in Russia itself have spoken out against the treaty! There was the appeal by all factions in the State Duma on the eve of President Yeltsin's trip to Tbilisi; all the North Caucasus leaders, who also had a negative attitude to the upcoming signing, gathered at the Foreign Ministry; there was the appeal by a whole series of Federation Council members.... To our great sorrow, all these opinions were also disregarded.

I would like to emphasize that, in the event of Georgia's commencing combat operations, the responsibility for this will also lie with those who secured the signing of the Russian-Georgian treaty.

[Shipunova] What forces are they, do you believe, and who in Russia could benefit by this?

[Ardzinba] Certain circles in Russia take a strange stand on their own country's security and pursue a policy in the interests of the West rather than of Russia itself. But the West has no need either of a strong Georgia or of a strong Russia; it is simply using the present situation in our country to increase its own influence and even presence in this region.

[Shipunova] Do you have in mind the plans to send UN peacemaking forces into Abkhazia?

[Ardzinba] Shevardnadze does not conceal the reason why he wants the peacemaking forces. In order to disarm the Abkhaz army, abolish Abhazia's state power bodies, and set up some directorate to run our state. Thus, it is a question of Abkhazia's occupation by UN forces and of those forces' resolving the problems which Shevardnadze was unable to resolve with his tanks last year. He evidently received assurances of support in the United States. Shevardnadze's report to the Security Council spoke bluntly about creating a precedent for the use of "blue helmets" in hot spots in the former Union. As we know, there are many such spots on USSR territory of the USSR, and once it starts....

[Shipunova] You disagree with this version of a "settlement." What, then, are your proposals?

[Ardzinba] The point is that our proposals and the Abkhaz side's position in this conflict in general are hushed up and distorted in every possible way both in Russia and in the West. I saw this for myself during my trip abroad and my meetings with representatives of

international organizations. The Georgian side portrays the matter as though Abkhazia is also agreeable to the sending in of peacemaking troops throughout the territory from the Ingur [Inguri] river to the Psou river. This is not so, in actual fact. Whereas such troops really could fulfill a disengaging role along the Ingur, which forms the actual border between Abkhazia and Georgia, I cannot understand against whom they will guard us on the Psou, which forms the border between Abkhazia and Russia. Against attack from the Russian Federation? Or is it that someone would like to station his troops along Russia's borders?

Our version of a settlement is that the opposing sides should pull back their troops a certain distance (3-5 km) on the border along the Ingur and that peacemaking forces should enter the corridor so formed. At the same time we have always said that Russian, not UN, troops should be used as peacemaking troops. International forces would be present here only as observers. If the chief aim is to be viewed as preventing the resumption of combat operations, this option is more than adequate. But the trouble is that Georgia's aim is quite different, because it does not seek a peace settlement and is not abandoning its plans to crush and subjugate Abkhazia, depriving it of its own statehood, i.e. it prefers the strong-arm option for resolving the problem.

From November 1993 we held talks with the Georgian side in Geneva and New York, and a memorandum and a communique were prepared which said that the sides would no longer use force. There were several opportunities to sign these documents, but their signing was thwarted, the decisive role in this being played by Shevardnadze's U.S. trip and by the U.S. Administration's support for his plans. In the United States Shevardnadze signed a joint statement with the Americans on military cooperation, according to which the United States will assist Georgia in reorganizing and arming the army, and a document was also signed on the creation of a joint security program (?!).

One gets the impression that UN membership gives a state the right to carry out both aggression and genocide against another people with impunity. Georgia started the war in Abkhazia two weeks after its admission to the United Nations. It was admitted contrary to the organization's Charter, being at that time a country without a legally elected leadership since its leaders had come in as the result of a coup d'etat. The decision itself was adopted by means of a poll [oprosnym putem], so it could be said that it was not Georgia that was admitted to the United Nations but Shevardnadze, evidently for his past "services." These violations also formed the basis of the Georgian leader's further unpunished conduct in respect of other peoples, moreover human rights are also being grossly violated in his own country, where what is virtually an authoritarian regime has been established and all dissidence is crushed.

[Shipunova] Shevardnadze called the Georgian parliament's decision to dissolve the Abkhaz Supreme Soviet "hasty," thus apparently dissociating himself from it. What do you think about this?

[Ardzinba] This is his usual subterfuge, an attempt to mislead. The decision adopted in Tbilisi stems directly from Shevardnadze's UN speech, and these are all links in the same chain. The Georgian parliament's decision is an unlawful document, it is....

You know, it is a work of literature, running to many pages. It contains such "pearls" as this, for example: "The Abkhazians seized part of sovereign Georgia—Abkhazia...." It is illegal even from the viewpoint of their own constitution, which does not feature any Abkhaz ASSR [Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic] or any autonomous entities at all. It was by adopting such a constitution that they initiated the conflict in the first place. Relations between Georgia and Abkhazia ceased de facto two years ago. From a legal viewpoint Georgia and Abkhazia are in no way linked today. There has long been no Abkhaz ASSR. There is the Republic of Abkhazia with its own constitution and its own legally elected organs of power. Therefore it is possible to talk about one thing only—the restoration of interstate relations between the two republics by concluding a treaty. We have been moving toward this, but such a development of events does not suit Georgia's leaders. So the Geneva talks are frustrated, the treaty with Russia is signed regardless of our positions and interests, then comes the appeal to the United Nations for military aid, and finally the totally illegal decision of the Georgian parliament is adopted on the dissolution of our republic's organs of power and even...on the institution of criminal proceedings against Abkhaz deputies!

By all these actions the Georgian side unilaterally put an end to the process of a peaceful political settlement.

[Shipunova] What do you intend to do in the present situation?

[Ardzinba] My trip abroad had the purpose of conveying our position to the world community and opening eyes to the actual state of affairs, since Georgia misleads everyone about Abkhazia's statehood and about our historical and present relations. The concepts of "separatism" and "violation of territorial integrity" do not apply to our situation. I met with UN Security Council President Merimee, with UN Under Secretary General Goulding, with the ambassadors of a number of countries, and with representatives of the UN peacemaking forces command and also of the U.S. Department of State. I believe that the meetings were mutually useful, since Abkhazia's true position on all questions of our conflict was explained, and the Abkhaz leadership's official appeals to the Security Council were handed over. A great deal came as a revelation to my interlocutors, because hitherto they had listened to and heard just one side here—the Georgian side.

[Shipunova] It is known that you have also proposed to the leaders of the Federation components in the North Caucasus the holding of a meeting in Sukhumi....

[Ardzinba] Yes, and I received their agreement in principle to such a meeting. We have not yet decided finally on the venue, and the crux of the matter is not whether it is held in Sukhumi or in one of the North Caucasus capitals. The chief thing is that we are seeking support not abroad but from our own compatriots and brothers. We intend, in particular, to invite representatives of the peoples of the North Caucasus as permanent observers in Abkhazia.

[Shipunova] Does all this mean that you are preparing for war? Will a possible decision to send UN troops onto the territory of Abkhazia mean the start of a new war?

[Ardzinba] I must declare most definitely that we will perceive any decision to which the Abkhaz side does not agree as an attempt at occupation, with all the ensuing consequences. It is not hard to surmise what the result of this will be not only in Abkhazia but also throughout the Caucasus region. Today we have been forced to strengthen our defenses, but we are not abandoning hopes and efforts aimed at resuming the talks process. If the Georgian parliament repeals its illegal decision, that will open the way to continuing the peace talks. We do not want war, and we will do everything to prevent a new armed clash. This also applies to the question of refugees. Yes, we oppose the return to Abkhazia of persons who participated in combat operations with weapon in hand and who continue to pose a threat to Abkhazia's security. They cannot return until there has been a full settlement of the conflict. This insistence of ours is natural. The situation in Abkhazia today is peaceful and calm. We are endeavoring to maintain it. But, I repeat, much will depend on the stand that Russia takes this time. [Ardzinba ends]

I was completing the preparation of this material for publication when I learned of a statement made by UN Secretary General Butrus Ghali. In it he admits that the necessary conditions do not exist in Abkhazia at present for sending in UN peacemaking forces. This statement inspires hope that common sense and political realism will, after all, triumph in the world community's attitude to the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict. But Russia, nonetheless, will have the last say. It is still not too late to prevent new bloodshed.

Secret Anti-Ardzinba Movement Circulates Appeal

MK2503125094 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 25 Mar 94 p 4

[Report by Aleksandr Koretskiy: "Enrollment for Abkhaz 'Fifth Column' Has been Announced. Overthrow of Ardzinba Being Prepared"]

[Text] Yesterday, Aleksandr Chikvadze, head of the Georgian Foreign Ministry, signed in Brussels an agreement on Georgia's joining the Partnership for Peace program. This is the first time that a country in a state of civil war intends to join it. Besides, the joining of the NATO program takes on a special meaning with the emergence in Abkhazia of a pro-Georgia secret organization.

The probability of the countries in conflict reaching an agreement is small despite the recent statements by Eduard Shevardnadze and Vladislav Ardzinba for the continuation of dialogue. Now the conflict may flare up in Abkhazia itself, where a secret organization "For a Peaceful Abkhazia" (its membership and national composition are unknown) has announced about existence. An appeal to Butros-Ghali, Boris Yeltsin, and Eduard Shevardnadze, circulated yesterday in Tbilisi by members of the underground organization points to their intention "to come out weapons in hand against the Ardzinba regime" if the latter fails to agree with Georgia. Besides, unless the United Nations urgently steps into the conflict, "a genocide of the Georgian population in Abkhazia may lead to irreparable consequences." The way out, in the underground organization members' view, is to bring Russian troops and Georgian police into Abkhazia.

In Shevardnadze's opinion, the organization consists of Abkhaz people and is in no way connected with Tbilisi. Information received by KOMMERSANT-DAILY from informed sources put in doubt the existence of this organization (most people in Abkhazia are more anti-Georgia than anti-Ardzinba) and gives grounds to believe that the creation of the "For a Peaceful Abkhazia" movement was not done without Tbilisi, which in the standoff in Sukhumi is using the old "fifth column" principle. A conflagration in the autonomous entity would undoubtedly spark a reaction in the world. And in this event, NATO may think it right for it to interfere ahead of the UN "blue helmets" unless the underground appeal first draws a reaction from Moscow, which has repeatedly stated that it is not going to ask for UN permission for peacekeeping every time.

Shevardnadze Addresses Citizens' Congress

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[Speech by Georgian State Council Chairman Eduard Shevardnadze at the First Congress of the Union of Georgia's Citizens in Tbilisi on 20 March—recorded]

[Excerpts] My speech is rather long. Every problem requires at least a little attention. I have to speak of things that are of significant importance for the Union [of Georgia's Citizens] as well as the whole country. If we can, let us endure.

Citizens—I do want this word to become customary for addressing. The first congress of the Union of Georgia's Citizens is a real occasion. A new mass political movement has been established, which aims to create a democratic, civic society and an independent, sovereign, and lawful state with a new market economy, new culture, new internal and foreign policy.

The Union of Citizens is, first and foremost, a party of cardinal reforms and a movement of reformers. The outlines of economic, political, and social reforms of the Union of Citizens will be based on the program and regulation principles that we have already approved.

Our activity will be based not on -isms and speculations on the hardships of the people but on real and effective policy. A citizen with his family, a free individual with his interests, honors, duties, and responsibilities is a cornerstone and a concern of the Union, a source of its power and existence. [passage omitted].

Documents drafted by the Union of Georgia's Citizens have received the approval of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the Eurobank, the European Union, and a number of other international organizations. [passage omitted]

Conflicts supported by outside forces are taking place in Georgia at present. The political, economic, financial, social, and spiritual crisis is being aggravated further. There are a few internal and external factors contributing to the aggravation of the crisis, and they require consideration.

The old totalitarian system has fallen, but a new democratic system has not been built yet. [passage omitted]

A transitional period, which began in the 80s and still continues, implies the replacement of one social structure with another and consequently a complex and contradictory process.

A program to help Georgia escape the crisis stipulates that the scientifically forecasted first stage of a transitional period will last approximately three years and that the second stage will last five years, until the year 2000. My forecast made during my election campaign at the Academy of Sciences does not really conform with this new forecast because the situation has changed in the country and some of our plans have been ruined.

From 1995, political, economic, and social stabilization will begin. Although an acute critical situation will still be felt until 1996. Then, a new steady stage of stabilization will come, and this will last until the end of the century. Our strategic target is to establish a new Georgian state based on law with a new market economy and a new civic society. To achieve this target, it is necessary to adopt a new constutution, the basic law of the state.

Several words about the Constitution. As you know, the Constitution of 1921 is currently in force. It was revived in February 1992 by the military council. The constitutional law on power adopted on 6 November 1992 by parliament was a correct decision.

It is necessary to make amendments to the 1921 Constitution, thus creating a new constitution. To this end, the constitutional commission has been set up and is chaired by the head of state; the commission is completing work on the draft.

What will the realistic revival of the 1921 Constitution and its revision give us? First, the authority of Georgia as a state having a long constitutional history will grow; second, the truly democratic norms and principles of the 1921 Constitution will be implemented, which will help to overcome the crisis, consolidate society, and neutralize those forces that are resorting to political speculation over the issues of the 1921 Constitution to exacerbate the crisis and destabllize society. [passage omitted]

The new edition of the constitution must be based on the following firm principles of the national constitution and world constitutional tradition:

1. The source of state power in Georgia lies in the people of Georgia; power is wielded by the people for the people. People ensure their sovereignty by means of their immediate and representative bodies.
2. The constitution recognizes the superiority of international law.
3. The constitution is an executive enactment.
4. Strong state power is based on the principle of division of power to preclude the sole control of any of its constituent circles and the infringement on people's human rights.
5. A strong state acts within the maximum framework of democracy. [passage omitted]

These are some guarantees with the help of which the danger should not emerge again in Georgia and the plague, as I once called it, should not occur.

Acknowledgement by the state of basic human rights and the possibility of securing them in court [passage indistinct] according to which voters give a mandate to the head of state, parliament, self-governing bodies, and officials.

The referendum—a general popular voting—will decide the country's most crucial issues, including the powerful and independent authority of the court, which will have power to withstand any kind of violence and injustice, and will resolve the issues connected with ethnic minorities, according to European and world standards. On the one hand, a man must be protected from state pressure by the constitution, law, and natural rights; on the other hand, a realistic constitutional defense will secure a democratic country from the danger of totalitarianizm, dictatorship, anarchy, and [word indistinct].

The constitution must make the historical process of establishing democracy irreversible—such is the stance of the Union of Citizens of Georgia. [passage omitted]

The new revised version of the 1921 Constitution, in my opinion, must consider the following executive bodies: a not-too- large parliament with two chambers, the president of the republic, the cabinet of ministers, and a constitutional and executive court. The Union of Citizens of Georgia believes that state power should be divided into legislative, executive, and judicial powers based on world experience.

The new law-abiding and democratic state must be a pluralistic and free state with a new type of democracy, which would be a guarantor [words indistinct].

One of the main strategic aims of the activities of the Union of Citizens of Georgia is representation in parliament and a business- like cooperation with parliament. [passage omitted]

The legislative situation in Georgia is very complex now. The Soviet legislation is in force—please, pay attention to this—as is the legislation adopted in 1991, decrees and resolutions adopted by the military and [word indistinct] councils, the legislation adopted since November 1992, and the Georgian Constitution of 1921. It is difficult to speak of a system when we have to deal with such instances. Proceding from the above, we think that the available legislation must be looked through thoroughly. We must define which enforceable enactment could be used today and which should be immediately changed. Along with preparing a new draft constitution, the state program envisages adopting new laws. In particular, I shall point out some of those laws that are of a fundamental importance for our society from the point of view of building a law-based state and getting the economy out of the crisis: the adoption and discussion of draft laws that have already been prepared must be sped up; the draft law on the industrial society, bills, lease, and land-ownership—especially on land-ownership. The process of adopting the law on land- ownership has been dragging on. In the meantime, a draft law on regulating and monitoring foreign currency, as well as on other issues must be prepared. It is impossible to imagine the normal functioning of the economic and financial credit system without having the above-mentioned laws. The packet of laws on tax must include taxes on transactions of valuable papers, transport, utilization of natural resources, and other normative documents. In the meantime, not only must we pass new laws and documents, but we must also improve and perfect the previously-adopted documents. They already need perfecting, and a number of amendments must be made to them.

[Excerpts] I would like you to pay attention to the following: it is of a particular importance to perfect economic legislation to attract foreign capital and establish a favorable atmosphere. Mainly, I mean the law on investments and foreign investments. The first question we were asked by businessmen in the United States was about our legislation concerning foreign investments. If this legislation aims to stimulate foreign investment, then they will move toward Georgia, as we have a unique geographic and geopolitical situation. [passage omitted]

Winning in the future parliamentary elections must mean establishing stability in parliament and the country as a whole. The revision of the constitution must secure a high status for parliament, the structure of a pliable body, and envisage the demands of a modern parliament and its specific features. This is how I see it: parliament must have two chambers, the lower chamber—the council of the republic—and the upper chamber—the council of representatives; it will be discussed in detail in the draft constitution. Parliament will have legislative and monitoring functions and will have the right to pass a vote of no confidence in the government and dismiss it.

The new parliament must be able, as is accepted in developed countries, to dismiss the republic's president or the comparable official. The new parliament must be able to hold new presidential elections; the president will have the right to dismiss parliament and hold elections to a new parliament. This is also important. Anyway, this is our stance. [passage omitted]

It would be expedient if parliament is granted the right to carry out only executive parliamentary control over the government's activities, which would rule out parliament's interference into a sphere of purely governmental activity.

The Union of Citizens of Georgia believes that the reorganization of parliament and the establishment of a new parliament are key to overcoming the crisis and stabilizing the political, social, and economic situation.

Several words about the executive power.

The head of state today is at the same time the chairman of parliament. It reflects the peculiarities of a transitional historical stage and combining the two jobs was temporary. In the opinion of the union—well, it is my own opinion anyway, and probably my organization will share my point of view—the introduction of the presidential post must be envisaged in the new constitution as of the year 1995. It is necessary for overcoming the crisis of authority and for economic and social stability.

Georgia must have a strong parliamentary and presidential power. It is in Georgia's national interests. The republic's president in the future must have wide constitutional rights, as is accepted worldwide. The republic's president must be a guarantor for the country's independence, territorial integrity, and the normal constitutional functioning of the state's governing bodies.

The president must, of course, be elected by the people.

In the opinion of the Union of Citizens of Georgia, establishing strong presidential power in Georgia will help overcome the political, economic, and social crisis in our country.

This is how I see the cabinet of ministers. As is known, the cabinet of ministers, ministries, departments, corporations, and other establishments have been reorganized. The cabinet of ministers has worked out a serious anti-crisis program, which we shall talk about later. In the meantime, the activities of the cabinet of ministers, ministries, and departments deserve serious criticism in carrying out reforms and generally overcoming the crisis. To reinforce the executive power and perfect its activity, it is necessary to make constructive amendments to the

law on the cabinet of ministers and radically reform the structure of the cabinet of ministers, forms of work and methods. The cabinet of ministers, ministries and departments are failing in carrying out radical reforms.

In this connection, I would like to say that I cannot agree with those who think that it is necessary to dismiss the cabinet of ministers now and create a new government, and so on. I must say upfront that it is not difficult to do; we can adopt a resolution today on the dismissal of the government, but I have no authority to do so and neither is it possible for me to present a worthy new cabinet. Specific ministers and ministries must be replaced: those who are corrupt. And if we have evidence of corruption, then the ministers should leave the government and be made accountable. But the nucleus of the cabinet of ministers must be retained. We have no choice at this stage. When the Union of Citizens completely comes to power, then you will see [passage indistinct] [passage omitted]

The government will be subordinated to the president, parliament, and partially to the constitutional law, which will define the terms of operation of government documents and [passage indistinct]. Ministries must be, first of all, political institutions and not industrial ones, but at the moment, they [passage indistinct].

Parliamentarians are right in saying that the voter-parliament-parliament structures-government inter-responsibility must be put into action. Parliament must work out a long-term program for building a law-based state; the cabinet of ministers must work out a program for carrying out economic and social reforms and overcoming the crisis. I must say that parliament has no such program and the program of the cabinet of ministers is not effective. [passage omitted] These reforms, on the one hand, will facilitate the establishment of a new state order, overcome the general crisis, and reinforce order, and, on the other hand, they will speed up the process of building a democratic state and bringing into effect the constitution and laws. This is in brief how the Union of Citizens of Georgia sees the reforms in the legislative, executive, and juridical bodies; first the highest echelons and parliament, amd them the cabinet of ministers, high court, and the constitutional court.

The Union of Citizens of Georgia welcomes Georgia's entry into the CIS, the ratification by the Georgian parliament of the relevant documents on Georgia's joining the CIS, and the granting to Georgia of the status of a developing country. [passage omitted]

Great changes should take place not only in the executive bodies of power but in [word indistinct] of autonomous formations [pormireba]. Changes should take place in the autonomous republic of Abkhazia after the settlement of the conflict, and I think that the conflict will be resolved after [passage indistinct]. Constitutional rights must be restored. A status secured to an autonomous formation by modern world standards is guaranteed to Abkhazia.

The conflict must be resolved on the basis of the bilateral Russo-Georgian, trilateral Russo-Georgian-Abkhazian, and the Geneva agreements. The United Nations, the Security Council, the CSCE, and other international organizations must help resolve the Abkhaz issue. The Abkhaz issue was addressed with gravity in the United Nations, the White House, the Congress, Washington, and New York during the recent visit there by the Georgian delegation. The Union of Citizens of Georgia supports and approves of the activities of the Georgian delegation in Moscow, Geneva, Washington, and New York and demands that the Abkhaz issue be resolved in a political and peaceful manner. Such is our will—resolving the Abkhaz issue by political and peaceful means. Another option, that is, another war will be an imposition. Let nobody force us to follow this way. Let nobody forget that [passage indistinct]

More support should be shown to the Abkhaz salvation committee, the Abkhaz council of ministers, the relevant commissions of the Georgian parliament, the Georgian deputy prime minister for Abkhaz issues, ministries, departments, radio, television—I am talking about Abkhazia—the press. More attention, of course, much more attention, care, warmth, and love should be shown to the refugees from Abkhazia and Samachablo. These people are our flesh and blood, and they must feel it everywhere, at every step they take.

The Union of Citizens of Georgia thinks that the constitutional status of the autonomous republic of Ajara needs to be perfected. We must work actively together with the Ajar leader to create a perfect model.

Ossetians will live in the Tskhinvali zone after the conflict is resolved. Please, take this into consideration. Like other ethnic minorities, a relevant status should be granted to Ossetia; this issue will be resolved through negotiations.

I am not going to talk about which of our decisions were wrong. I do not want to talk about it—the redeployment of troops in Abkhazia, entering Tskhinvali in such a way, and so on and so forth. There will come a time when we will talk about these issues. Now, we must seek solutions to these issues, therefore, my address is less polemic and is mostly directed toward finding solutions and practical measures.

Corresponding amendments must be made to the new version of the constitution. We must comprehend that conflicts in Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali zone are not so much of an ethnic but mostly of a political and social nature and are the results of interference from a third, foreign force. [passage omitted]

It is necessary to carry out reforms in the local and municipal authorities, and they must be implemented in 1994-95. [passage omitted]

The service of the regional management has been set up at the office of the head of state's staff. This service,

although it needs to be perfected, is still [passage indistinct]. New structures of state management have been established—the mayor's offices in Kutaisi, Poti, Rustavi, Tbilisi, and other towns. But these changes are not enough. Thorough reforms are needed. Municipal elections should be held and local government bodies created; central and local authorities should be constitutionally separated.

We think that a regional administration —a qualititively new institute of government—must be established. We still need to think about the final model for it. It is an issue for discussion. The law will separate the functions of local government bodies and the regional administration. Dictatorship and [word indistinct] are ruled out. In the opinion of the Union of Citizens of Georgia, taking into consideration world experience, the system of local government must consist of two levels. The first level would include self-government of villages, populated areas, and town governments under rayon subordination; the second level would include self-governing bodies of the republic's towns and rayons. The principle of kray-arrangement is not ruled out. Let us think about it seriously; it has its pros and cons and optimistic prospects. A special two-level system of self-government must also be established in Tbilisi. The first level would include Tbilisi rayon's municipalities, and the second level would include the mayor's office of Tbilisi, the council, and so on. [passage omitted]

If we want to have armed forces, we must cooperate with the Russian Army and the Russian servicemen. There is no other way. We have been everywhere, visited every place, and have come to the conclusion that this is the only solution for speeding up this process.

We have wonderful relations with our neighbor, Turkey. Mr. Demirel says that we are brothers, and we really are, as rel brotherly relations are being established; but could this border be opened proceeding either from our interests or the interests of Turkey? It would be inadmissible. The narcotics business alone will sweep Georgia away and bring calamity to the country. Therefore, for the time being, we must preserve the existing system of guarding the borders and simultaneously, spend several years on training our own border troops. I hope it is a serious and stately attitude to the issue. [passage omitted]

The Union of Citizens of Georgia thinks that it is necessary to analyze the causes of failure of the Georgian army in Abkhazia, draw conclusions, and map out a program for action. We must work out a plan for utilization of the potential of the modern Georgian military and industrial installations. This potential, by the way, is huge. [passage omitted]

Every military formation and department on the territory of the Republic of Georgia must—in reality not formally—be submitted to the head of the Georgian state, commander-in-chief of armed forces. It is necessary not because I need extra powers [Shevardnadze is commander-in-chief of Georgian armed forces as well as head of state and chairman of parliament], but because in every normal, democratic country this system must be established and indeed has been established.

It is necessary to disband unlawful armed formations, prohibit unlawful carrying of firearms, eradicate the instances of plunder and marauding the population by some members of the armed forces, reinforce the activities of the military procurator's office and the judicial bodies, reinforce lawfulness, and establish a single armed forces. Such is our aim.

The Union of Citizens of Georgia considers it necessary to work out a reliable program, the right strategy and tactics to resolve ethnic and social conflicts and consensus between nations. We must not lose tolerance, which has been our trait for centuries and which has become our national feature. Georgia and our future generations must not lose this trait.

The Union of Citizens of Georgia thinks that priority should be given to the political and peaceful settlement of ethnic and social issues and not to the military settlement. We have gained a bitter experience in this respect. Theory and practical measures must be worked out for overcoming social, political, and economic conflicts as well as ethnic conflicts, and reaching a consensus between nations. Georgia can make its contribution in this respect in the world and cooperate with many centers worldwide.

You know that the Georgian delegation has recently submitted a plan for settling the Abkhaz conflict to the UN Security Council. I would like to remind you of some of its points. This plan envisages, of course, the safe and honorable return of the refugees, holding elections under international surveillance, and, on this basis, electing new bodies of power, establishing the international directorate with the participation of [words indistinct], the Russian Federation, the group of Georgia's friends, and other member states of the United Nations before holding elections.

To carry out the functions of the executive power, a joint provisional administration of Abkhazia, which will act under the supervision of the international directorate, must be established.

An international body especially set up under the auspices of the United Nations, with the help of the Russian Federation and with the participation of the CSCE, will function. This body together with the directorate and the Georgian Government will work out and implement a program for Abkhazia's economic revival.

There are three options in deploying peacekeeping forces in Abkhazia. I shall give you three options and maybe we should choose one of them—maybe it will not be the best one:

1. sending in multinational peacekeeping forces to Abkhazia under the auspices of the United Nations; in principle, nearly every member of the Security Council has agreed on this.
2. sending in Russian troops to the zone of conflict under the UN banner. Granting a UN banner is a bit problematic and not every country may agree on it.
3. deployment of Russian troops on the basis of bilateral negotiations and under UN supervision.

These are the three options. In two or three weeks time, we shall see which option we will have to deal with. The choosing will be up to the Security Council. [passage omitted]

The role of Georgians and Abkhazians in resolving the Abkhaz conflict should grow. We must care for the refugees and those forcibly displaced and protect their human rights and alleviate their hardship.

It is necessary to curb the activities of the mercenaries of the mountain people of the Transcaucasus. They ae forming an alliance with the richest fundamentalists, reactionary fundamentalists, [word indistinct] fascism, and others. It is necessary to have constructive relations with Russia's new parliament. Such relations have started, and the first steps have already been taken. It is necessary that we work out rational, cautious but effective tactics and strategy for action in this direction.

Historical lessons on resolving conflicts, Russo-Georgian relations against this background, and their positive and negative results give us grounds for a serious discussion and for seeking a way out of the crisis.

I think that the resolution of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict is entering a new, more advantageous phase, and it is necessary to intensify this process.

A deep analysis must be made of the situation in the area chiefly populated by the Azeris in Georgia's regions.

We must not ignore any corner and any nationality or ethnic minority. The situation must be critically assessed and realistic measures carried out to make up for previous mistakes. Very serious mistakes have been made in these regions. Go and see, listen and you will realize how barbaric the methods carried out by Georgian authorities sometimes used to be. It is inadmissible in a normal and civilized country.

The situation in the regions of Georgia mainly populated by Armenians and Greeks must be studied in detail. Measures must be taken for strengthening friendship between peoples. We must reinforce the representation of ethnic minorities in the authorities. It is necessary.

The Georgian state gives a full guarantee to the Russians, Ukrainians, Azeris, Armenians, Greeks, Abkhazians, Ossetians, Jews, Kurds, Assyrians, and all other nationalities living in Georgia that their national interests will be constitutionally secured, and it is one of the basic principles and regulations of the Union of Citizens of Georgia.

Radical changes must be carried out in the activities of law- enforcement bodies. The constitution and laws must facilitate the perfection of the system of law-enforcement bodies. First of all, the independence of law-enforcement bodies is necessary. They must be subjected only to the constitution and law, and on this basis, the legitimate authorities.

Radical reforms must take place in the Interior Ministry, in the procurator's office, and in court. The battle against the political-economic-social mafia, corruption, black-marketeering, narcotics, racketeering, bribery, and extortion must be stepped up.

Investigatory bodies must be separated from all departments and a separate investigatory committee subject to the government must be established. This will happen at a later stage. Reforms must be carried out in the system of serving sentences. This is also a serious issue.

The role of the Bar should be raised. On the basis of reinforcing the public order, an advantageous legal space must be created for businesses and investments and for creating a free economic zone on the territory of all-Georgia. [passage omitted: legal business must be supported; the rule of law is necessary for setting up businesses in Georgia; police and judicial staff should be trained abroad; the union will actively participate in restoring law and order]

A few words about the mass media. Reforms in the mass media are necessary. Georgia must become integrated in the world information and communication network. The law on the press must be put into effect even more effectively. The professionalism of the press, and of radio and television staff must be raised. [passage omitted: freedom of the press is a reflection of the level of society's culture; the union thinks the state must facilitate development of the press and television]

As long as the state subsidizes the press, radio, television, or a news agency, it has the right to demand of them that they report objectively on state policy and when commissioning programs. Cooperation between the press and the authorities must be constructive. We must also facilitate setting up an opposition press. We must help that press as well. We must embrace this culture. And then we shall overcome the malady of slander which we find in some papers which put all of us off because they are unqualified and unprofessional. The union of citizens of Georgia must take care of the opposition and of the opposition press as well. [passage omitted: it is necessary to sell competitive information in the world information market; defend interests of the Georgian people; the coordinating bureau set up at the office of head of state has a serious mission to carry out; carrying out economic and social programs are important for implementing political programs]

Once again, I would like to tell you that the main ideas for political, economic, and social reform were voiced in our previous electoral platform, in the report which was read out at the Academy of Sciences. [passage omitted:

Shevardnadze says he is often wrongly reprimanded for not having a program and says that opponents should read the papers; the ideas of these reforms were approved of by people]

Some ideas about the reforms in the social and economic sphere: 90 percent of the population of Georgia is living below the poverty line; the vast majority of the population is starving; there have been instances of death through starvation; there is a catastrophic disparity between living standards, prices, and wages. [passage omitted: inflation is rocketing up; the number of forcibly displaced people is growing; the coupon is falling; measures taken by the cabinet of ministers have yielded no results so far; the union aims to take Georgia out of the deep economic crisis and improve the standard of living]

An anticrisis program has been submitted to the Georgian parliament. Main provisions of the program have been discussed by the union of citizens of Georgia at different levels. It will be desirable if every member of the union and every citizen of Georgia knows what these documents say. These documents must be dispatched to rayons and towns. These documents constitute quite a serious basis for a constructive dialogue with every party and with the population in general.

Both main trends in the long-term strategic development and immediate measures that need to be taken have been discussed in these state and government documents. The Republic of Georgia's anticrisis program consists of three main aspects: conceptual, forecasting, and regulatory measures for the economy; and about 100 state programs. In view of the present critical situation, the program will be renewed quarterly.

In accordance with these two main documents, on the instruction of the head of state, and on the basis of a decree by the cabinet of minsters, an anticrisis program will be prepared by every ministry and administration of every region. Please, see that this work is carried out.

I will touch only on some of the key issues of the national program and the aims of the union of citizens of Georgia.

Analysis shows that the current crisis in Georgia is of a structural and systematic nature and is embracing every circle and part of the economy. The crisis has exacerbated Georgia's socio-economic backwardness. The union of citizens of Georgia considers that the shortest and the most effective way of extricating Georgia from the crisis is to restore and develop economic links with the CIS countries. Those who voted against Georgia joining the CIS do not comprehend the reality of Georgia's present predicament and misunderstand those people living in dire poverty, whose feelings they are going to manipulate and whom they are trying to force into the streets. It will not work. [passage omitted about the importance of retaining the CIS market]

The main existing funds must be renewed and modernized, otherwise they will become physically extinct. We cannot carry out renewal and modernization without links with these CIS countries. In the immediate four or five years we have no other options.

It is inadmissible to transfer to a free economy without management. It is necessary to manage and regulate the economy according to market principles.

The main priorities for Georgia's social and economic development in the short and medium-term are: to overcome the crisis and rebuild the destroyed economy as quickly as possible; to speed up the transfer to a market economy; to carry out the necessary structural changes by means of speeding up the development of medium and big business; to supply vital spheres of the economy with power by economizing in consumption and increasing domestic power production; [words indistinct]. [passage omitted: the program for Georgia's power development must be discussed separately by the newly elected council; people should know where we stand and what the solutions for emerging from this crisis are; the transport system must be developed; the export network must grow]

We can manufacture products for export if factories start to work and people get down to work. Goods for export can be produced and foreign currency reserves can be created.

A market economy is the first mechanism for overcoming the crisis and for the formation of an independent economy. In the meantime, we must take into consideration the fact that reforms must be carried out systematically and not in segments.

By the year 2000 we must go through three stages of development. The main aim in the social sphere is to keep the population alive and avoid a social explosion. At the second stage, we must gradually restore a precrisis standard of consumption by the population. At the third stage, we must achieve the standard of living of a developed country and establish a socially oriented market economy. [passage omitted: Shevardnadze thinks a program which envisages the maximum development of the economy is best]

We will restore the partnership with the CIS countries. I do not doubt it. Therefore, we will orientate toward the second variant of the program which means that by 1994, that is in the current year, there must be a 50 percent growth in the products produced inside the country compared with 1993. In 1995 the figure must be above 100 percent. These are realistic aims. It is not a lot but it will help us get our breath back.

I know that I shall be told that Shevardnadze addressed the congress of the Union of Citizens of Georgia like a secretary of the Communist Party—like he used to address old congresses. I am telling you that no union and party is going to be viable without it. The union and a political movement must be wherever a man's fate is decided.

The expected growth of industry will create advantageous circumstances for achieving micro-economic stabilization, but the monetary and credit situation still remains complex due to the high prices of the imported raw materials.

Georgia's foreign debts are growing fast. We have not felt it yet, but in two or three years it will become a serious issue for Georgia. Now we are rejoicing at the European Union's granting us 70 million Ecu [European currency units] in the beginning, and then 40 million Ecu, and now it promises to allot 20 million Ecu and so on—all this has to be paid back. These debts will grow. Many of these debts will be forgiven, probably. Some skeptics are saying that the Union will not be able to take what we shall not have, but it will stop giving us loans as it will have no incentive [passage indistinct].

A major migration of people in search for work abroad is to be expected. We must study this process seriously and regulate this process, as is done in other countries. [passage omitted: Shevardnadze talks about the growth of privatization; he says privatization will grow in 1994-95; joint-stock societies and investment funds will be established]

The Union of Citizens of Georgia is proud that among its members are industrialists, businessmen, bankers, financiers, managers and thousands of representatives of a new social strata. The Union of Citizens of Georgia in the meantime is a political party and a political movement for representatives of big, medium, and small businesses. Establishing the market economy is one of its aims. [passage omitted—Shevardnadze says the market economy will help overcome poverty]

It is necessary to resolve the issue of legalizing the hidden privatization wherever possible. We must not pass a vote of no confidence in the corps of managers, heads, and specialists, provided they can secure high standard of production and improve the living conditions of workers. They must participate in the process of privatization and become owners. Then, they will care more about high standards of production. In the meantime, the Union of Citizens of Georgia is also a party and a political movement for agrarian reforms. It is good that this issue was thoroughly discussed in the commission. The anti-crisis program envisions a 50 percent growth in agricultural products in 1994; it is problematic but we must achieve it. [passage omitted—Shevardnadze says private sector will grow]

As of 1994, major structural changes are to be envisioned in agricultural industry through developing the potato, beetroot, and cattle industries. Positive moves in agriculture are connected with the further development of the food and processing industry. This branch has been plundered. In the immediate future you shall have a chance to look at figures as to what has been smuggled out of Georgia over the last four to five years. Anything that could be smuggled from these branches has been smuggled, but nothing has been imported in return. This is the lawlessness and anarchy that reigned there. We must put an end to it and take care of these branches. [passage omitted—those who are making most noise now are the culprits of these] It is envisioned that in 1994, the industries of tinned food, wine products, tea, mineral waters, meat products, and milk will develop quickly; as a result of the privatization and flotation of the food industry, enterprises and the private sector in this branch will grow up to 30 to 35 percent by 1995.

Work is finishing on programs, which are to be called land, bread and foodstuffs, in accordance with different branches. The Union of Citizens of Georgia unites peasants, farmers, members of agriculture and the processing industry, and representatives of the agricultural business; therefore, the aim of the union is to work out and implement the fundamental programs of the agrarian and industrial complex. [passage omitted—Shevardnadze says building organizations must be privatized; gives a list of enterprises which have to be privatized] The committee for building and architecture has worked out programs which in principle meet our demands. Despite the acute financial crisis, it has been envisioned that the communications network will develop, and first of all, those networks that have been damaged as a result of terrorist acts or natural forces will be restored. There are good prospects in cooperation in this field with foreign countries. Siemens is coming to Georgia. An appropriate tender has taken place here, and influential businessmen who undertook the development of the communications network are coming to Georgia. This cooperation will be based on the principle of partnership. The development of every kind of transport has been envisioned. Especially important are the plans worked out by the railway, naval, air, and automobile transport departments. Railway transport deserves a particular attention. We must restore railways, put it in order; as well as underground and other means of communications.

The Union of Citizens of Georgia pays a great deal of attention to the issues of ecology, and the national and world movements of the Greens. The Ministry of the Environment has created a program for avoiding the ecological catastrophe. Please, I appeal to all parties, our colleagues and, of course, the Union of Citizens of Georgia, while there still is time, while our nature and climate still exists, let us take care of it. Forests have been extinguished. However hungry we may be, we must take care of the forest and nature, as generations will not be able to restore what we shall destroy today. Let us turn to these issues.

We must also take an active part in carrying out such programs as trade and supplies, as well as others. It is expected that prices will start to become relatively stable as of the second half of 1994; it is expected. A realistic demand-supply market mechanism and raising [words indistinct] will facilitate it. The Union of Citizens of Georgia thinks that stepping up of management of economy is of a particularly great importance. It means

an organic merging of state and market mechanisms. The following emergency measures must be carried out.

Somebody has written me a note, let me see what it says. They are the questions. I shall answer them in the end. I thought that they wrote to me to stop talking [laughter]. The Union of Citizens of Georgia thinks that stepping up of managing economy is of a particularly great importance today. In this connection, here are some principles:

—Carrying out the emergency economic situation on the whole of the Georgian territory;
—Reaching an agreement between the existing parties. I appeal to our partners, other parties, their leaders and members to achieve an agreement on a political moratorium. [passage omitted—Shevardnadze says that destabilization must not be allowed and that reforms must be carried out under normal political and economic conditions]
—Reinforcing the state and executive discipline in all spheres of economy;
—Selling the products made in state enterprises at freed prices in state trade network. I think that this process about which I have talked for a long time must be restored - free prices and a simultaneous pay rise. We cannot avoid it. Considering the current situation, we cannot come out of the crisis; therefore, I am asking relevant departments to study this issue in detail. [passage omitted—union thinks the unprotected layers of society must be personally helped]
— Improvement of state subsidies for transport, education, health, science and culture. The contractual system must become the basis for carrying out a state program involving the state and agriculture. The market mechanism which would give an incentive to an agriculture worker, must be set up.
—The production of grain, stock-raising and combined fodder must become a priority; we must use every means and every possibility. The Introduction of barter trade as part of a contractual system can be allowed.

One of the main aims for the union is to overcome the hyperinflation, and the currency must be stabilized. The main constituent elements of the state's anti-inflation program are:

—Measures for financial stabilization;
—The maximum cut of the budget deficit;
—Overcoming structural disproportions;
—Supplying the commodities market with the basics;
—Reorganizing the import-export structure and establishing order in this field.

The most significant issue which the economy is facing is the issue of the national currency. It is a sensitive issue for every family. [passage omitted—the coupon must prepare economic conditions for transition to a monetary unit]

Before the economy is revived, strict selection money and credit policy must be carried out. The coupon's full-scale circulation must be secured. The volume of production must grow. The mechanisms of payment by check must be put in action. Cash and non- cash payments must develop. [passage omitted—Shevardnadze talks about the measures needed for creation of the basis for the Georgian national currency; says everything will be done to get credits from abroad which would help strengthen the national currency]

The Union of Citizens of Georgia thinks that Georgia's entry in the ruble zone needs serious studying. Let us not hurry about it. It needs serious—very serious—studying. Conclusions made in haste will be no good to us. We must judge taking into consideration our own possibilities and foreign relations. A state program—Georgia's Economy and the Ruble and the Dollar Zone—must be worked out; as well as its prospects. Everything must be published and all our population must discuss these issues. [passage omitted—Shevardnadze says the state system of regulating the economy must be set up; to this end state programs must be used; about 100 programs exist and 12 such programs have been tested in the United States and were approved there, and as a result partners have appeared]

An end must be put to the simplistic attitude towards comprehending the market economy. It was a widespread belief before that the market economy must develop spontaneously. It shall never happen. The regulating role of the state in the countries with market economies is secured and guaranteed, and the state always has whatever it needs for keeping the population alive, for its welfare, etcetera.

The economic emergency situation means operational and perfect implementation of economic measures of regulation, and in particular, the head of state and the cabinet of ministers must retain the right to adopt decrees without the preliminary publication and discussion in parliament of drafts and other legislative documents and resolutions.

The head of state must be granted the right to temporarily stop legislative acts in the economic field—temporarily. It is necessary to save the economy and people from catastrophe, and is in accordance with national interests.

These measures are necessary for saving democracy and the market economy from chaos and anarchy. [passage omitted—economic reforms and privatization must be speeded up]

1994 must become the decisive year for our fight against the crisis, anarchy, chaos and destabilization.

With the aim of overcoming the crisis, temporary emergency measures must be carried out operationally in 1994; among them are:

—State credits in the first half of 1994 must be given only for importing foodstuffs, fuel and medicine;
—A strict economic and legislative responsibility must be set up for the effective use of means;

—Bread, sugar, and other foodstuffs must be secured for the population;
—A centralized and fixed distribution of fuel and energy resources to the population must be established. [passage omitted—contracts must be drawn with peasants and agricultural enterprises]

It is expedient to contract the state capital investments only for vitally important commodities—foodstuffs, power, and engineering. Those enterprises which are not competitive and produce no raw materials and which cannot be privatized and cannot be put on flotation, must be given free to foreign firms should they want it. Do not let it frighten us. Georgia will not be sold or impoverished by it. [passage omitted—monetary reforms are necessary; the coupon must be reinforced and foreign currency temporarily used]

It is of a major importance that the Finance Ministry and the national bank of Georgia in time finish work on programs of the bank and finance reforms. We are lagging behind, terribly lagging behind, and it is impossible to revive the economy without the improved bank and finance systems. [passage omitted—interest on bank deposits must grow; a permanent state commission for working out and implementing monetary and credit policy must be established]

There are arguments here alleging that we were interfering with the independence of the national bank. I still think that that independence cost us very dear. There must exist a strong state formation which would control credits; because it is impossible to stop giving credits and stop life from flowing. It is impossible for parliament to control each sum given out by the national bank. That is why such a commission must be established.

A state program for reinforcing the coupon and the national currency must be established.

It is expedient to perfect the mechanisms for the social protection of the population living under the conditions of growing prices and tariffs, and use granted credits with a concrete aim. [passage omitted—the unemployed, refugees and the forcibly removed must be helped; order must be established in distributing humanitarian aid; more aid is to come; if Western allies see that the aid is going to wrong places, then these channels will be blocked off]

It is necessary to speed up working out and implementing the price model—which is characteristic for the market economy countries—and creating the agricultural raw materials and products in the republic. A scientific center which would study prices and the economic situation must be set up.

The speed of carrying out the strategic and tactical aims, suggested by the economic and social development and their scale, will depend on using Georgia's internal potential, as well as on the nature of the international political and economic situation in which Georgia's economy will have to function in the immediate future. There are such possibilities. [passage omitted—Georgia has a potential to produce competitive products for the world market; Georgia's geo-political situation can help Georgia's economy; Georgia may become a crossroad from Europe to Asia; Georgia get a foothold into the Russian market; Georgian national products must take root in the Russian market before others do and withstand the competition; Georgia is rich in waters]

Many people say that in five, six, or seven years the drinking water may cost more than petrol. We have these water resources, let alone mineral water.

True, Georgia today has no useful ores, which, according to the world market would be especially large, but Georgia can make its contribution in economic development for utilization and recovery of manganite, arsenic, ferrous metals [words indistinct] and other existing deposits using modern technology. [passage omitted: Georgia is rich in hydro resources]

If we take into consideration how many hydro resources are available per square kilometer, Georgia comes first in the world. Our country has these resources. We can be talking here about big and small hydro-electric stations. In two or three years we can achieve great results together with Western firms which are showing a big interest in it.

Simultaneously, oil deposits must be discovered. Without fail, Georgia has oil. I am sure that there is oil and gas in Georgia. One of the pieces of advice from James Baker was that he gave us names of two more companies besides the ones he was here with; we can trust these companies and they will give us a guarantee that in the immediate future we may discover oil deposits. [passage omitted—talks about Iceland which exists on thermal energy; Georgia also has inexhaustible thermal deposits which are not used]

The main factor in the development of Georgia's economy are working resources and working forces which, more or less, know the modern technology of industry and have a knack to learn the most complex technological processes.

Georgia's gradual political and economic integration with the democratic world is a factor for Georgia's economic development, as well as the humanitarian and economic aid of the developed Western countries, and the realization of the programs of the IMF, the World Bank, and other international economic organizations.

As I have said, our meetings in Washington are hope-inspiring. Not only did we get the support of the World Bank and the IMF, but also the promise of support from those countries which have a decisive voice in the world's financial organizations, and, in particular, the United States and other countries.

In order to realize these reserves we must envision general tendencies for the social and economic development. [transmission interrupted]

U.S. Allegedly Charging Georgia Double for Wheat

LD2403203394 Tbilisi IBERIA in Georgian 1545 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] Tbilisi, 24th—According to the IBERIA news agency, speaking at a Georgian Supreme Council session, Zurab Murvanidze said that he had received a document proving that Georgia was purchasing wheat for 120 U.S. dollars per tonne while it could pay 60 U.S. dollars per tonne. In reply, the head of state said that it was really possible to purchase a tonne of wheat for 60 dollars but credits granted to Georgia by the United States and the EU [European Union] obliged Georgia to purchase wheat at double the prices only in these countries.

Parliament Rejects Shevardadze's Nominee

LD2403221394 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian 2050 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] Today's sitting of the Georgian parliament was remarkable for its poignancy and outbursts of passion. Before MPs set to discussing the principal issue on the agenda, that is, the approval of the staff of the government, the morning sitting was overwhelmed by harsh, radical, and sometimes unfounded speeches. Several statements were made.

Eventually, at the evening sitting, the parliament got down to approving the Cabinet of Ministers. A deputy prime minister, Avtandil Margiani, faced the parliament. He made an extensive speech about the work done and the future plans. The deputy prime minister had to answer numerous questions.

Voting was conducted to approve Mr. Avtandil Margiani to the post of deputy prime minister. The (?party) of Republicans and the Ilia Chavchavadze Society did not take part in voting. They had announced their refusal to participate in any voting on the approval of members of the Cabinet of Ministers at the previous sitting.

Some 105 votes were cast for Avtandil Margiani, while 31 were against and five abstained. The nomination of Avtandil Margiani has failed. A deputy speaker, Vakhtang Rcheulishvili who chaired the sitting, said that the head of state had the right to once more nominate his candidate to this post.

Party May 'Infer' Shevardnadze 'Hostage to Mafia'

LD2403190094 Tbilisi IBERIA in Georgian 1545 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] Tbilisi, 24th—It became known to the IBERIA news agency that Guram Muchaidze has given a statement on behalf of the Social Democratic Party: "The other day, Zurab Zhvania, the general secretary of the Union of Georgia's Citizens, accused the Georgian Cabinet of Ministers of corruption. Eduard Shevardnadze, the chairman of the same union and Georgian head of state, has presented [to the parliament] for approval the same staff of the Cabinet of Ministers.

[No opening quotation marks as received] This arouses astonishment and concern among us. The head of state should either reject the statement made by the general secretary and distance himself from it or, provided he shares the viewpoint of the latter, withhold the list of candidates. If the head of state prefers to keep silent we will infer that he has become a Mafia hostage."

Majority Says Opposition's Aim is Coup

LD2403201294 Tbilisi CONTACT INFORMATION AGENCY in Russian 1745 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] Today, the parliamentary majority made public a statement in connection with certain moves made by some opposition parties at the Supreme Council session on 21 March. The statement refers to those moves as an effort to aggravate the political crisis with a coup d'etat as its final aim.

The opposition forces, says the statement, are fighting under the same formula as they did during the Communist regime, that is, "the worse the better." However, if in the struggle against the empire this formula contributed to achieving independence, today, it threatens the existence of independence.

A process of destruction began in Georgia much earlier than the present leadership came to power. An unfortunate heritage was left to this leadership: War in the Tskhinvali region and in Abkhazia, a provoked civil war, an integration of the interest of enemies and traitors, a military defeat, a series of subversions and sabotage.

Despite all the current difficulties, the government has been trying to bring the country out of the crisis. It has achieved a breakthrough in the international isolation. As a result Georgia has become an active member of the international community and a part of various international political and economic structures, established strategically significant international relations, restored political and economic links with Russia, and other countries. The above-mentioned is, actually, only the beginning of bringing the country out of the crisis. And the establishment of stability in the country is the only condition for the revival of the country's economy.

Representatives of the parliamentary majority call against the creation of the government crisis, prove their constructive attitude toward the confirmation of the Cabinet of Ministers, and regard as unacceptable the issue of cardinal changes in the government due to the lack of an appropriate basis.

Members of the parliamentary majority appeal to the opposition parties to reach a consensus, considering efforts to discredit the head of state and the Cabinet of Ministers as unacceptable in essence, for it could lead to chaos in the country.

Opposition Charges Rejected by Security Minister

NC2403210594 Yerevan SNARK in English 1542 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] Tbilisi, March 24 (SNARK)—Lately repeated opposition charges of the Security Ministry are illegal and groundless, told in his exclusive interview to SNARK the Georgian Security Minister Igor Giorgadze. "Non-serious is demand for us to disclose instantly the crimes in a country where population has tens of thousands of arms units at their hands, hundreds of tons of explosives, when wild capital accumulation and influence-sphere sharing takes place between the mafiosi and bandit groups", he said.

As told the security minister, certain deputies—throwing stones at the government and blaming it as inactive in crime prevention—do not take into account the fact that Georgia has no legislative basis. Also the special services are not armed with necessary equipment to lead the fight with banditry and terrorism, thinks Giorgadze.

The principal obstacle to efficiency of his institution Giorgadze sees in disagreement between the security and defense ministries of Georgia. The latter often prevents the actions of Security Ministry. He gave an example when a month ago special investigation experts were admitted to the place where the Defence Deputy Minister Kekelidze was killed only after 12 hours after the tragedy.

Estonia

Ministry Reports Christopher Congratulations

WS2403144494 Tallinn Ministry of Foreign Affairs Press Release in English 1111 GMT 24 Mar 94

["Immediate release" from the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tallinn on 24 March]

[Text] U.S. "active engagement on behalf of the withdrawal of Russian forces from Estonia" is a "high priority" and "remains as strong as ever" stated U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in a letter delivered to Estonian Foreign Minister Jueri Luik today by U.S. Ambassador Robert Frasure.

In his letter dated March 23, Mr. Christopher notes that he has sent messages of congratulations to Foreign Minister Andrejevs and Foreign Minister Kozyrev on the successful conclusion of troop withdrawal negotiations. "The United States considers the Latvian-Russian agreement to be an important milestone toward our mutual goal of seeing all Russian forces withdrawn from the Baltics, including Estonia, by August 31, 1994."

Mr. Christopher further assures Mr. Luik that the United States "will continue to urge the Russian Government to live up to its commitment to withdraw its forces."

Strong international support for the withdrawal of ex-Soviet forces from the Baltics played an important role in Russia's decision to continue Estonian-Russian talks April 5-6 in Moscow and to abide by the agreed-upon date for withdrawal. Yesterday, in Riga, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania called upon "the international community to continue its vigilance that this date will be observed."

Luik Affirms 'No Concessions' in Upcoming Talks

WS2503100994 Tallinn ETA in English 1710 GMT 24 Mar 94

["News Release"]

[Text] Tallinn, March 24—Estonia will make no concessions to Russia at the next round of inter-state negotiations to be held in Moscow on April 5-6, Foreign Minister Juri Luik said in an interview with ETA.

"Estonia intends to make no concession at negotiations with Russia," Luik said while adding that Estonia's Government has been flexible enough by issuing a decree under which retired Russian military can apply for residence permits on individual basis.

On commenting possible agreement on Russian troop withdrawal, Luik said that "if the agreement comes, it will certainly come with different terms than the agreement between Russia and Latvia". Russia must consider Estonia's Aliens Law, Citizenship Law and property legislation, Luik added.

"In Latvian-Russian agreements we considered positive only the general agreement on troop withdrawal," Luik said. "We did not comment on other agreements," he added. "We do not accept pegging troop withdrawal to other issues."

Social guarantees of the retired Russian military are Russia's problem, Luik said. Now, Russia is also covering social expenses of the retired military under a draft being negotiated for already two years, Luik said.

"Giving residence permits is entirely Estonia's domestic matter and we decide whom we will give the permit and whom we will not," Luik said.

Russian Diplomat Criticizes Border Issue View

WS2403190594 Tallinn BNS in English 1555 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] Moscow, Mar 24, BNS—Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman Grigori Karasin, speaking today at a briefing in Moscow, claimed the attitude of the Estonian leadership toward the Estonian-Russian border issue is shortsighted.

The Russian diplomat accused Estonia of "stubbornly clinging to a line that is inconsistent with the CSCE principles and leads to a dead end, not recognizing the borders shaped in this part of Europe as a result of post-war developments."

The Estonian Government on March 17 approved and passed for consideration in the parliament a bill on borders. The document defines the Estonian-Russian border in accordance with the 1920 Tartu Peace Treaty. The treaty designated as belonging to Estonia a number of territories which in 1944-45 passed under the jurisdiction of Russia's Leningrad and Pskov regions.

Karasin reminded that at last week's hearings in the Russian parliament "the arguments of Estonian MP's [member of parliament] that Estonia's territorial claims on Russia are legitimate were decisively refuted as unconvincing from the point of view of international law."

More Skirmishes Along Russian Border

WS2403155994 Tallinn THE BALTIC INDEPENDENT in English 18-24 Mar 94 p 2 (Tentative)

[Unattributed report: "Trouble Brews Along Border"]

[Text] Fears that Estonian citizens may be vulnerable to attacks and persecution along a disputed frontier with Russia in the country's southeastern Petseri region have prompted an ex-minister to call for their evacuation from the area.

The plea was made by Endel Lippmaa, an ex-minister for relations with Russia, who argued that Estonia could no longer guarantee the safety of citizens residing in the Russian-controlled area.

In recent weeks, the 2,000-square kilometer Petseri region has been the site of several skirmishes between local residents and Russian authorities. In one notable incident last month, Russian militiamen allegedly entered Estonian territory in Varska, in the Petseri county, and accosted a group of local villagers. The militiamen reportedly dragged the villagers across Russia's "administrative border" and beat them.

Mr. Lippmaa proposed making the current administrative border with Russia an official state demarcation line, a move which, if carried through, would effectively cede to Russia territory which Estonia has claimed as its own under the terms of the 1920 Tartu Peace Treaty. The remarks were made in an interview with Radio Free Europe on March 2 in which Mr. Lippmaa commented on the progress of Estonian-Russian talks.

An estimated 6,000 residents out of a total population of roughly 50,000 in the Petseri region are believed to be Estonian citizens. Many Estonians have accused Russia of encouraging ethnic Russians to settle there as a way of reinforcing its claims to the area.

Minister Denies Deportation Goal in Paldiski

WS2403150194 Tallinn BNS in English 0950 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] Tallinn, Mar 24, BNS—Population Minister Peeter Olesk and special representative of the government in Paldiski Juri Tikk in an interview to BNS resolutely contradicted rumors that the authorities are making up lists of Paldiski residents to be deported.

Rumors have lately been circulating in Paldiski that the number in the stamp entered in documents during registration of the population denotes the order in which people will be deported from Estonia. In reality the numbers 1, 2 or 3 in the stamp indicate in which of the three registration stations in the town a person was registered.

Olesk condemned the rumors as "utterly false" and blamed them on people's inner anxieties or misapprehensions. "The Estonian nation has never attempted to deport anyone, while we know very well how we were deported more than once," he said. "Since we know what deportation means, we never planned anything like that for others."

Tikk voiced the opinion that the rumors were launched with a definite goal in view. "The number in the registration stamp has no ulterior meaning," he affirmed. "The documents of the Russian military, for example, are marked with a stamp bearing number 4. We have no intention of repeating what Russians, Germans or whoever did here in their time."

On Wednesday [23 March], the second day of population registration in Paldiski, 906 people were registered. Tikk told BNS there were no incidents, except that some forged documents came to light. On Tuesday 689 residents were registered in Paldiski. Both Tikk and Olesk told BNS there's no particular opposition to registration in the town.

"The residents of Paldiski themselves wish to be registered, since it will increase their security during the dismantling of the nuclear reactors when checks on people staying in the town are unavoidable," Olesk said. "The stamps allow people to move freely in Paldiski under the special regime."

Registration of Paldiski residents ends on March 26.

Russians To Present List of Men

WS2403205494 Tallinn BNS in English 1300 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] Tallinn, Mar 24, BNS—The representatives of Russian forces are expected today to present to Estonian authorities the lists of Russian military who reside and work in Paldiski, Juri Tikk, special representative of the government in Paldiski, told BNS.

"Estonian military authorities together with Russian officials will go over the lists and permit applications and, if everything tallies, the documents will be stamped for registration," Tikk said. The stamp allows Russian military to move freely in Paldiski during the dismantling of the nuclear reactors when control over persons staying there will be stepped up.

Tikk said the command of Russia's 144th motorized rifle division and the Baltic Fleet are supposed to present similar lists, since some officers serving in those units live in Paldiski.

At a meeting with Russian officials on Tuesday [22 March] the two parties agreed that family members of the Russian military living in Paldiski as well as their cars will be registered and that lists of officers and seamen will be given to Estonian authorities. Tikk said about 600 Russian military are currently stationed in Paldiski.

"We are not entirely satisfied with the compromise, but there's no other solution at present," Tikk said. "On the basis of the lists we are to get we shall issue the Russian military with temporary permits for moving about in Paldiski. We hope the lists can be trusted."

Riigikogu Passes Law on Presidency

LD2403171094 Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian 1300 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] The Riigikogu today adopted the law on presidency. It clarifies the president's duties under special circumstances. Illar Hallaste, a member of the Constitutional Commission, told ETA [Estonian Telegraph

Agency] that the aim of the law was to develop the idea of how and under what circumstances the president is to fulfill his constitutional duties. Most controversial so far has been the clause about presidential decrees, should the Riigikogu for some reason find it impossible to convene. According to Hallaste, the preliminary version of the draft law on presidency contained a clause allowing the president to issue decrees in the case of state of emergency or state of war. According to the adopted law, the president can issue decrees whenever the Riigikogu is convened for an extraordinary session but is irresolute, and the prime minister has notified the president of this being the case of urgent state requirements, Hallaste explained. He hopes that this solution is satisfactory to the president as well.

Kalevi Combat Units Get Supply of Israeli Arms

WS2303195994 Tallinn BNS in English 1600 GMT 23 Mar 94

[Text] Tallinn, Mar 23, BNS—All soldiers of combat units in the Kalevi infantry battalion are armed with Israeli-made Galil rifles, said the commander of the battalion, Major Alar Laaneman.

Only the battalion's training company still has Chinese-made Kalashnikov rifles. The battalion's weapon stock also includes Chinese-made grenade launchers. It uses Soviet-made armored personnel carriers as combat vehicles.

The 400-strong Kalevi detached infantry battalion comprises three combat companies, a training company and a service company, plus mortar, anti-aircraft and anti-tank batteries.

The anti-tank battery is armed with 106-millimeter anti-tank guns. Also the mortar unit is adequately armed. But the anti- aircraft battery still has no anti-aircraft machine guns despite that the battery's commander and soldiers have received the necessary training, Laaneman told reporters.

The commander of the battalion pointed out shortage of officers as one of the causes why the unit still is unable to show proper combat readiness, for instance, in gathering by alarm. Three military advisers from Finland currently stay with the battalion to assist in training the force.

The Kalevi battalion was set up on March 18, 1992. On May 22 the same year the battalion took over from the Soviet forces a military college complex at Jagala, some 40 km to the east of Tallinn, where it is stationed now. A separate unit, the Northern detached infantry company, was set up with the Kalevi battalion in the fall of 1993. The company at present is stationed in the former Soviet military base town of Paldiski.

Latvia

EU Deems Troop Agreement 'Considerable Step'

WS2503091894 Tallinn BNS in English 1913 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Excerpts] Riga, Mar 24, BNS—The European Union [EU] has issued an official statement welcoming the agreement on troop withdrawal reached by Latvian and Russian negotiators March 15 in Moscow. [passage omitted]

According to the EU statement, the agreement is a considerable step toward the full withdrawal of Russian forces from the Baltic states as stipulated by the CSCE 1992 Helsinki declaration. The accord may also contribute to establishing goodneighborly relations between Latvia and Russia, EU said.

The presidents of Latvia and Russia are expected to sign the withdrawal agreement in April.

Ulmanis, Party Leaders Discuss Skrunda

WS2503113494 Riga DIENA in Latvian 15 Mar 94 pp 1, 8

[Article by Sanita Upleja: "Ulmanis Discusses Skrunda With the Union of National Forces"]

[Text] Riga, 14 Mar—President Guntis Ulmanis met today with representatives of the Latvian Union of National Forces [LNSA] to discuss the possible signing of an agreement with Russia on troop withdrawal and the future of the Skrunda radar station. Actually, after two hours of conversation, both sides maintained their original positions regarding the Skrunda station. Nevertheless, all participants in the meeting were unanimous on the point that G. Ulmanis should meet with Russian President B. Yeltsin and emphasize, during their meeting, the unwavering position of Latvia. G. Ulmanis promised that during his meeting with B. Yeltsin, he will speak about the possibility of shortening the term—four years and 18 months—of the Skrunda agreement, but admitted that he has no hope of a positive result, because the term has already been agreed upon between the United States and Russia.

The president expressed his opinion and his support for the compromise achieved by the government on this issue. After signing such an agreement, he said, Latvia will at least have some international guarantees and supervision from other countries, whereas without any agreement, Latvia would have no such international support. Naturally, by concluding the agreement, the government and the president will assume political responsibility and risk, but if the opposite occurs, Latvia would make no progress, emphasized the president.

G. Ulmanis stated that after signing the agreement, the United States will allot $10 million for the dismantling

of the new building at the Skrunda radar station, and will provide assistance in relocating the military personnel to Russia.

The view of the Latvian National Independence Movement [LNNK] was expressed at this meeting by Aristids Lambergs, who stressed that Russia should first withdraw its Army by 31 August 1994, and only then should the issue of the Skrunda radar station be discussed. However, even providing that the agreement with Russia is concluded, there are no guarantees that the Army will be withdrawn, said Lambergs.

In his turn, Latvian Popular Front Chairman Uldis Augstkalns said that, first of all, the Latvian Government and parliament should officially acknowledge the fact of the 1940 occupation, and then appeal for the United Nations to do the same. U. Augstkalns emphasized that while considering the Russian troop withdrawal, Latvia should rely upon the CSCE document which demands immediate and unconditional troop withdrawal, whereas signing the agreement with the present conditions would mean that Latvia practically abandons all hope of fulfilling these documents.

Ojars Blumbergs, representative of the "League of Economic Activities," represented by LNSA, emphasized that the presidents of both countries should take more pains to plan for the repatriation of civilians to Russia, because a lot of people wish to return to their fatherland. In addition, Russian state institutions have shown a well-disposed interest in this respect, he said.

Several representatives of LNSA expressed the view that by signing the agreement on the Skrunda radar station's continued operation in Latvia for another four years, Latvia would show its willingness to maintain a Russian military base on its territory, which would mean that the withdrawal of the Russian Army is not complete. The chairman of the Party of Latvian Union, Maris Plavnieks, described the Skrunda radar station as a Trojan horse which, if it remains in Latvia, will always provide the opportunity for provocative actions, both on the part of Latvia and Russia.

The leader of the "Fatherland and Freedom" faction in the Saeima [parliament], Maris Grinblats, stated that the national party members have not given up the idea of a referendum on the Skrunda issue. Taking into account the fact that the Constitution does not provide for referendums on issues regarding international agreements, there would be a possibility to organize a so-called recommending poll.

Faction Voices Objections

WS2403205594 Tallinn BNS in English 1300 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] Riga, Mar 24, BNS—The Saeima (parliament) faction Homeland and Freedom considers that the Latvian Government had no rights to authorize a delegation to initial agreements with Russia on army withdrawal, the faction head, Maris Grinblats, told reporters Wednesday [23 March].

According to the law of Latvia's international agreements, accords on foreign armed forces' presence and their status in the territory of Latvia can be signed only in the form of interstate agreements and only the Saeima has rights to determine if they can be signed or not, said Grinblats.

The Latvia's law of international agreements is also violated by initialing the agreement on Skrunda radar station's legal status during its further functioning and dismantling, because the agreement does not provide for its ratification at the Saeima, say the faction members.

Grinblats said that it contradicts with the above mentioned law and the Cabinet's earlier promises that all agreements, drafted during the Latvian-Russian talks, would be handed in to the Saeima for ratification.

The faction demands that Cabinet respected Latvia's legislation and did not sign interstate agreements with Russia. The faction also appealed to the government to hand the initialled agreements in to the Saeima for taking further decisions.

Accord on Russian Pensioners Criticized

WS2403192694 Tallinn BNS in English 1555 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] Riga, Mar 24, BNS—The Saeima's (parliament) the Latvian National Independence Movement faction considers that the agreement on Russian retired military personnel social guarantees creates more anxiety than other accords in the package of Latvian-Russian initialled agreements, the faction head, Aleksandrs Kirsteins, told reporters Wednesday [23 March].

The signing and ratification of this agreement at the Saeima would make the passing of a law of foreigners and stateless persons status in Latvia more complicated, and it would also deteriorate the relations between Latvia and Estonia. In Estonia a similar law, being already in effect, delays initialling of agreement with Russia on military pensioners' social guarantees.

After signing an agreement that legalizes occupation army officers' residence in Latvia, there will be no use for the Saeima to ask NATO member countries' parliaments to acknowledge the occupation of Latvia in 1940, said Kirsteins.

Kirsteins considers Latvia can sign only those agreements with Russia, that do not concern Russian retired military personnel social guarantees.

The faction also considers that before signing the agreement, the public opinion must be taken into account as well, because nearly a half of the Latvia's inhabitants

does not support the signing of agreement on Russian retired military personnel social guarantees, said Kirsteins.

The faction and the Latvian National Independent Movement board will discuss March 26 the issue and declare their attitude towards the package of agreements, initialled during Latvian-Russian interstate talks.

Party Wants Changes in Agreement

WS2403192594 Tallinn BNS in English 1555 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] Riga, Mar 24, BNS—The Latvian Democratic Party acknowledges the necessity of agreement between Latvia and Russia on army withdrawal, but it considers that the unacceptable for Latvia regulations in the agreement and its supplementary documents must be changed.

The party claims the initialled documents correspond with Russia's interests to keep possibly large military potential in Latvia and sustain people supporting Russia's attempts to make Latvia economically dependent from Russia.

The party is against granting equal rights both to Latvian pensioners and Russian military pensioners and their families, and remaining of disbanded army units' officers and their families in Latvia. The party also is against Skrunda radar station's further functioning in Latvia for five and a half more years, without even coming to terms as to the rent payments.

The party head, Aivars Kreituss, said Wednesday [23 March] at a press conference that the rent for Skrunda radar station's usage could equal 40 million U.S. dollars a year. Kreituss considers Latvia has to determine precisely the radar station's created damages to the environment and demand a compensation for them from Russia.

Kreituss condemned Latvian president Ulmanis decision to meet with Russian President Yeltsin only in the middle of April. He stressed that the above mentioned problems had to be discussed immediately to manage the revising of the agreements by May and complete the Russian Army withdrawal by the fixed term.

The party members consider the publishing of the not yet fully coordinated agreements unnecessary, and they condemn the Saeima [parliament] faction Homeland and Freedom proposal to organize a referendum on this issue, because it is not even clear who would organize and finance the referendum.

The Democratic Parrty is represented at the Saeima by five deputies.

Control Office Announces Debt Owed by Military

WS2403150194 Tallinn BNS in English 0950 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] Riga, Mar 24, BNS—Russian army troops stationed in Latvia owe Latvia 9 million 865 thousand lats (nearly 17 million U.S. dollars) for electricity, different taxes and services, announced the Latvian Controle Office for Russian army withdrawal. The debt for electricity equals 436,556 lats (nearly 763,000 U.S. dollars). The office says there are nearly 7,000 Russian militaries in Latvia at present, and 190 army units are stationed in 242 military objects. As many as 36 of these objects are Russian ships and other floating objects, and the number of army cars and trucks equals 827.

Besides, there are 360 wagons with munition in Cekule and Garkalne ammunition depots. By observing all security measures, it is possible to withdraw from Latvia approximately 60 wagons a month.

The office head, Ilgonis Upmalis, said Wednesday at a press conference that the Russian army leadership has disbanded 400 army units in Latvia without informing the Latvian authorities if the disbanded units' officers and their families left Latvia or remained here. The same can be said about the Russian Northwest Army Unit.

Upmalis claimed he had information that the Russian army leadership has ordered to disband all army units still stationed in the territory of Latvia. Upmalis noted that the Russian Northwest Army Unit refused to make known the Russian army withdrawal schedule, and, when signing agreement on army withdrawal, the schedule would be unilateral and the interests of Latvia would be disregarded.

The office also announced that Russia officially passed over to Latvia several military objects: Alksnis and Birjuzov Military school in Riga, Daugavpils Military school, and Jekabpils and Lociki airports. As many as 40 Latvian commercial structures have bought the former Russian army military objects.

Country Opens Consulate in Vitebsk, Belarus

WS2403192394 Tallinn BNS in English 1555 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] Riga, Mar 24, BNS—The Latvian Consulate in Vitebsk, Belarus, opened Thursday [24 March] as the first foreign representation outside the capital, Minsk. Armands Kruze is appointed Latvia's vice consul to Vitebsk. The opening ceremony was attended by Latvian Ambassador to Belarus Janis Lovniks, Vitebsk Mayor Valeri Neusev and other officials.

Lithuania

Slezevicius Discusses Relations With Russia

LD2403192894 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1820 GMT 24 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladas Burbulis]

[Text] Vilnius March 24 TASS—"Russia links the ratification of the agreement granting mutual trade preferences which was signed by myself and Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin in Vilnius on November 18, 1993 with our relations with the Kaliningrad region," Lithuanian Prime Minister Adolfas Slezevicius said.

Speaking at a news conference in Vilnius on Thursday, Slezevicius said that "if previously the administration of the Kaliningrad region tolerated Vilnius' efforts to settle Lithuania's ties with Russia on a mutually advantageous basis, lately it has been trying to press for unilateral concessions from Lithuania."

"However we believe that we must seek a way out for adopting decisions which would be beneficial to both countries," he said. Primarily, automobile transportation through Lithuania, "simplified" visa procedures for the region's citizens and other problems, he added.

About four months ago Lithuania sent a note to Moscow, requesting to speed up the ratification of the signed package of economic agreements. But there has been no reply since then, the premier said.

He noted that a high-level delegation left for the Kaliningrad region on Thursday to seek a "positive solution to all questions on the spot, including the construction by the Lithuanian side of housing for Russian servicemen returning from Lithuania and Estonia."

President Accepts Economy Minister's Resignation

LD2403143994 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1400 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] President Algirdas Brazauskas accepted the resignation of Lithuanian Minister of Economy Julius Veselka today. This is the sixth minister in the sixth government, led by Adolfas Slezevicius, leaving his post.

Belarusian Move Halts Swedish Aid To Ignalina

WS2503094294 Vilnius ELTA in English 1915 GMT 24 Mar 94

[From "News Bulletin" No. 464]

[Text] Vilnius, March 24, ELTA—"Equipment which is to be sent to Ignalina nuclear power plant is still in Sweden and there is no progress in the affair", Director of special projects of Swedish state nuclear inspectorate Jan. H. Nistad told ELTA.

He confirmed information of ELTA released earlier that the assistance to Ignalina plant was suspended unless there is an agreement with Belarus preventing claims of the country to Swedish companies if a nuclear incident takes place in Ignalina.

"The position of Belarus is very undetermined", Nistad said. Last November, Swedish Prime Minister appealed in written form to his Belarusian counterpart asking to explain the reasons why Belarus is not signing Vienna Convention on the civil responsibility for nuclear damages and not approving a law on nuclear energy. There is no answer so far, Nistad said.

Director of Belarusian Institute of Energy problems Aleksandr Mikhalevich said there were no principal obstacles to sign the Vienna Convention or a bilateral agreement with Sweden. But "there are no people specialized in nuclear energy neither in Belarusian Government nor in Foreign Ministry", he said.

Ignalina Plant's Account Frozen for Tax Purposes

WS2403093294 Vilnius ELTA in English 1759 GMT 23 Mar 94

[From "News Bulletin" No. 463]

[Text] Vilnius, March 23, ELTA—The account of Ignalina nuclear power station has been frozen for a month. The wages for employees have been paid from the loans received and other sources. This happened because of the Lithuanian tax laws according to which income taxes were imposed on the production which was not sold.

"The nuclear power station sells the energy to the state energetics system which only now pays for the energy produced last year", Director General Viktor Shevaldin said. He also noted that the nuclear power station was the object of higher risk, thus, it was very irresponsible to do such things. However, "strikes and rallies are not our methods", Shevaldin said.